

WIDEY COURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

WIDEY COURT



PRIMARY SCHOOL



CONNECT
ACADEMY TRUST

<i>Policy reviewed:</i>	<i>September 2026</i>
<i>Date of next Review:</i>	<i>September 2027</i>
<i>Who reviewed this policy:</i>	<i>Governing body</i>

Widey Court Attendance Policy

Attendance Lead: Heidi Taylor

Policy Status: School Policy

Applies to: All pupils of Widey Court

Policy Review: Sep 2026 next due Sep 2027

1. Policy Statement

Widey Court recognises that regular school attendance is fundamental to a child's education, wellbeing, development and future opportunities.

The school's overarching attendance priority is:

Every child in school, on time, every day, ready to learn and ready to thrive.

Regular attendance enables children to access their education consistently, develop positive relationships, establish routines, participate in the wider life of the school and benefit from the academic, social, emotional and enrichment opportunities available to them.

Widey Court is committed to developing a positive culture of attendance in which pupils, parents and carers, school staff and external partners understand their respective responsibilities. The school will adopt a supportive, inclusive and graduated approach to attendance, identifying barriers at the earliest opportunity and working collaboratively with families to overcome them.

This policy has been developed with reference to the Department for Education's statutory guidance, **Working together to improve school attendance**, and other relevant Department for Education guidance. The school will ensure that its attendance practice remains consistent with current statutory requirements and Local Authority procedures.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

1. Promote excellent attendance and punctuality across the school.
2. Ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to access a full and appropriate education.
3. Communicate clearly to pupils, parents and carers the importance of regular attendance.
4. Identify attendance concerns and barriers at an early stage.
5. Provide appropriate support to pupils and families experiencing difficulties with attendance.
6. Work collaboratively with parents and carers to improve attendance.
7. Recognise and address the individual circumstances and needs of each child.
8. Promote positive physical, emotional and social wellbeing through regular attendance and a strong sense of belonging.
9. Ensure that attendance concerns are managed consistently, fairly and proportionately.

10. Escalate concerns appropriately where support has not resulted in sufficient improvement.

11. Work with the Local Authority and other agencies where further intervention is required.

3. The Importance of Regular Attendance

At Widey Court, we believe that **every school day matters**.

School provides children with much more than academic learning. Regular attendance gives pupils the opportunity to:

- develop knowledge and understanding across the curriculum;
- practise and consolidate their learning;
- build positive relationships with peers and adults;
- develop confidence, independence and resilience;
- establish positive routines;
- develop communication and social skills;
- participate in trips, visits, clubs, performances, sporting activities and other enrichment opportunities;
- develop a strong sense of belonging;
- access pastoral, SEND and wider support when required;
- experience success and celebrate their achievements;
- develop the skills and attitudes required for future education, employment and life.

Frequent or prolonged absence can result in missed learning and reduced opportunities to develop relationships and participate fully in school life. Missed learning can also make it more difficult for pupils to maintain continuity with the curriculum.

Attendance is therefore considered in the context of the **whole child**. The school's aim is not simply to achieve a particular attendance percentage, but to ensure that children are present, engaged, supported and able to thrive.

4. Attendance and Wellbeing

Regular attendance supports children's wider wellbeing by providing routine, structure, social interaction, relationships and a sense of belonging.

Where a child is experiencing difficulties with attendance, the school will seek to understand the underlying reasons rather than assuming that absence is simply a matter of parental choice.

Potential barriers may include:

- anxiety or emotional difficulties;

- friendship difficulties or bullying;
- SEND needs;
- medical needs;
- difficulties with learning;
- family circumstances;
- difficulties establishing morning routines;
- previous negative experiences of school;
- transport or practical difficulties;
- other factors affecting the child's ability to attend regularly.

Where such barriers are identified, the school will work with the child and family to determine appropriate support.

Widely Court's approach is therefore:

Understand the barrier. Provide support. Work together. Improve attendance.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Attendance Lead

The Attendance Lead, **Heidi Taylor**, will have responsibility for overseeing the school's attendance procedures.

This includes:

- monitoring attendance and punctuality;
- identifying emerging attendance concerns;
- communicating with parents and carers;
- coordinating attendance support;
- working with the SENCo and Family Support Worker where appropriate;
- coordinating Attendance Action Plans;
- liaising with SLT;
- working with the Local Authority and other agencies where appropriate;
- ensuring that attendance procedures are implemented consistently;
- monitoring the effectiveness of interventions.

5.2 School Leaders and Staff

All staff have a role in promoting good attendance.

Staff will:

- provide a welcoming and inclusive environment;
- promote a positive culture of attendance;
- monitor attendance and punctuality;
- identify pupils who may be experiencing barriers to attendance;
- communicate concerns appropriately;
- support pupils returning following absence;
- contribute to appropriate attendance interventions.

5.3 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives an appropriate education and should support their child's regular attendance at school.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- ensure their child attends school regularly;
- ensure their child arrives on time and is ready to learn;
- notify the school promptly when their child is absent;
- provide an appropriate reason for absence;
- seek medical advice where appropriate;
- work with the school to address attendance concerns;
- engage with support offered by the school or other agencies;
- avoid unnecessary absence during term time.

Where attendance is becoming difficult, parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school at the earliest opportunity.

6. Illness and Absence

Widely Court recognises that children will occasionally become unwell and that there are circumstances where a child should remain at home.

Parents and carers should use current **NHS guidance** when deciding whether their child is well enough to attend school.

For example, NHS guidance states that:

- children with a high temperature should remain at home until it has gone;
- children with mild cold symptoms can generally attend school if they are otherwise well and do not have a high temperature;

- children with vomiting or diarrhoea should remain away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours.

Families should refer to the NHS website for current advice:

NHS – Is my child too ill for school?

Where a child has an ongoing medical condition or specific health need, the school will work with the family and relevant professionals to consider appropriate support.

7. Attendance Monitoring

Widey Court will monitor attendance and punctuality regularly.

The purpose of attendance monitoring is to:

- identify emerging patterns of absence;
- identify pupils who may require additional support;
- understand potential barriers to attendance;
- ensure that appropriate intervention is offered;
- monitor the impact of support;
- identify when further intervention may be necessary.

Attendance data will be considered alongside the individual circumstances of the child.

The school will not rely solely on attendance percentages when making decisions about support.

8. Graduated Attendance Support

Widey Court operates a graduated approach to attendance concerns.

The stages below form the school's internal attendance support process. Individual circumstances will always be considered, and the school may adapt the process where appropriate.

Stage 1 – Supportive Intervention

Day 3 of absence

Where a child's absence reaches three school days and attendance is becoming a concern, the school may issue a **Stage 1 Supportive Attendance Letter**.

The purpose of this communication is to:

- make parents and carers aware that attendance is being monitored;
- reinforce the importance of regular attendance;
- establish whether there are barriers affecting attendance;

- offer appropriate support;
- encourage early communication between home and school.

Where appropriate, support may be offered through the **SENCo and/or Family Support Worker**.

Stage 1 is intended to be supportive and offer early intervention where required.

The school's approach is:

"We have noticed. How can we help?"

9. Stage 2 – Further Support

A further two days of absence

Where there has been no sufficient improvement following Stage 1, the school may issue a **Stage 2 Attendance Letter**.

The school will continue to explore the reasons for absence and consider whether further support is required.

This may include:

- discussion with the Attendance Lead;
- involvement of the SENCo;
- involvement of the Family Support Worker;
- discussion with the pupil;
- pastoral support;
- identification of barriers to attendance;
- consideration of adjustments or reasonable support where appropriate;
- development of an Attendance Action Plan;
- involvement of relevant external services.

The school's approach remains:

"Let's work together to remove the barriers."

10. Stage 3 – Formal Attendance Concern

No sufficient improvement

Where there has been no sufficient improvement despite appropriate support, the school may issue a **Stage 3 Attendance Letter**.

This letter will clearly communicate that attendance remains a significant concern and that continued lack of improvement may result in referral to the **Local Authority for further action**, in accordance with statutory guidance and Local Authority procedures.

Parents and carers will be invited to attend a meeting with:

Heidi Taylor – Attendance Lead and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- review the pupil's attendance and punctuality;
- listen to the pupil and family;
- identify any remaining barriers;
- review support previously provided;
- agree clear expectations;
- establish appropriate actions;
- develop an Attendance Action Plan;
- identify responsibilities for school and home;
- establish a review date;
- consider whether further professional or Local Authority involvement is appropriate.

The school's aim remains to achieve sustainable improvement in attendance.

11. Attendance Action Plans

Where an Attendance Action Plan is required, this will be developed collaboratively with the pupil and family where appropriate.

An action plan may include:

- a clear attendance target;
- agreed actions for home and school;
- morning routine strategies;
- support for emotional wellbeing;
- support with friendships;
- SEND-related support or adjustments;
- a named member of staff to welcome or check in with the pupil;
- support with reintegration following absence;
- Family Support Worker involvement;
- SENCo involvement;

- external agency involvement;
- agreed monitoring and review dates.

The plan will be reviewed to determine whether the agreed actions are having the intended impact.

Where an intervention is not effective, the school will consider whether the approach needs to be adapted or whether additional support is required.

12. Punctuality

Regular attendance includes arriving at school on time.

Punctuality is important because late arrival can result in pupils missing:

- the beginning of lessons;
- key explanations and instructions;
- morning routines;
- opportunities to connect with peers;
- important learning;
- the opportunity to start the school day calmly and confidently.

Persistent lateness will be monitored alongside attendance and may be addressed through the school's graduated attendance support process.

Our expectation is:

Every child. Every day. On time. Ready to learn.

13. Returning Following Absence

Widely Court recognises that returning to school following a period of absence can sometimes be challenging.

Where appropriate, staff will provide support to help pupils reintegrate successfully.

This may include:

- a welcoming member of staff;
- a check-in;
- reassurance;
- support with missed learning;
- pastoral support;
- support with friendships;
- discussion of any concerns;

- an individualised reintegration approach where appropriate.

The aim is to ensure that pupils feel safe, welcomed and confident about returning to school.

14. Local Authority Involvement and Formal Action

Widely Court is committed to working with families to improve attendance and will seek to identify and address barriers wherever possible.

Where attendance does not improve despite appropriate support, where support has not been engaged with, or where formal intervention is otherwise appropriate, the school may work with the Local Authority.

Depending on the circumstances and relevant Local Authority procedures, formal attendance interventions may include:

- an attendance contract;
- an Education Supervision Order;
- a Notice to Improve;
- a penalty notice;
- other statutory interventions available to the Local Authority.

The DfE guidance makes clear that decisions regarding formal intervention should take account of individual circumstances and the school's and Local Authority's statutory responsibilities.

A particular number of days' absence does not, in itself, mean that a particular legal action will automatically follow.

DfE – Working together to improve school attendance

GOV.UK – Legal action to enforce school attendance

15. Promoting and Celebrating Attendance

Widely Court believes that attendance should be promoted positively.

The school will seek opportunities to recognise:

- consistently good attendance;
- improved attendance;
- improved punctuality;
- pupils who have overcome barriers to attendance;
- positive attendance habits;
- classes and individuals demonstrating commitment to regular attendance.

Celebration and recognition will be proportionate and inclusive, ensuring that pupils who have experienced genuine barriers are not disadvantaged.

The purpose is to help children understand that regular attendance is something positive and that every day provides opportunities to learn, develop and enjoy school.

16. Partnership with Families

Effective attendance is most successful when schools and families work together.

Widey Court will maintain an open and supportive approach to communication.

Parents and carers should contact the school as early as possible if they have concerns about their child's attendance.

Families should not wait until attendance has become a significant concern before seeking help.

The school will listen, seek to understand individual circumstances and work collaboratively with families to identify appropriate solutions.

Where appropriate, the school will work with other professionals and agencies to provide additional support.

17. Our Attendance Commitment

Widey Court is committed to creating a school environment in which children feel safe, valued, included and excited about learning.

We recognise that children thrive when they have:

- positive relationships;
- a sense of belonging;
- predictable routines;
- engaging learning;
- opportunities to succeed;
- opportunities to participate;
- appropriate support when difficulties arise.

Our attendance strategy is therefore rooted in the belief that **attendance and wellbeing are closely connected**.

We want children to experience everything that Widey Court has to offer.

We want them to learn, make friends, explore, create, perform, play, compete, discover, develop confidence and make positive memories.

Above all, we want our pupils to **thrive**.

Our commitment is simple:

Every child. Every day. On time. Ready to learn. Ready to thrive.

Attendance Lead: Heidi Taylor

18. Relevant Guidance and Further Information

This policy should be read alongside current statutory and relevant guidance, including:

Working together to improve school attendance – Department for Education

Communicating with parents about school attendance – Department for Education

Is my child too ill for school? – NHS

Help with getting your child to go to school – GOV.UK

Legal action to enforce school attendance – GOV.UK