Our Ref: JP/JAS/AutTerm2-Update

11th November 2026

Wednesfield Academy
www.wednesfieldacademy.co.uk

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Celebrating Success, Winter Readiness and School Attendance

Attendance - Celebrating Our Success!
We are delighted to share some fantastic news with our school community. Wednesfield Academy has finished 2nd in the Department for Education's Similar Schools Report for 2025-2026 academic year out of 21 similar schools! This is a tremendous achievement and one that all our pupils, parents and staff should be incredibly proud of. This is a fantastic reflection of the commitment of our pupils, families, and staff in making sure that children are in school, learning and achieving.

To recognise and celebrate these achievements, all pupils will receive special recognition during the final week of the autumn term in December. We want everyone to share in this success and recognise the important part they have played in making Wednesfield Academy such a successful school.

Christmas Countdown – Every Day Counts!
To continue celebrating and encouraging excellent attendance, we are also launching our 'Christmas Countdown' initiative! Every pupil who achieves 100% attendance and arrives on time every day will receive a special Christmas treat on the last day of term. We want to finish the term on a high and encourage every pupil to make the most of every school day. Being in school and arriving on time gives pupils the best opportunity to learn, succeed and be part of everything happening at Wednesfield Academy.

Let us work together to make our Christmas Countdown a success!

Being Winter Ready – Keeping Healthy and Attending School
During the winter months, it is inevitable that coughs, colds and other seasonal illnesses will circulate. However, it is important that we do not mistake every cough, cold or runny nose as a reason for a pupil to remain at home. NHS guidance is clear that pupils can attend school with a mild cough, common cold, runny nose or sore throat, provided they are otherwise well enough to attend and do not have a high temperature.

We want pupils to attend school as regularly as possible, whilst also being mindful of the health and wellbeing of others. There are some simple steps we can all take to help prevent the spread of winter illnesses. We encourage parents and carers to remind their children of the following:

- Wash hands regularly: Use soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, particularly after using the toilet, before eating and after coughing or sneezing.
- Catch it, Bin it, Kill it: Use a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, dispose of it immediately in a bin and wash hands afterwards.

- Bring tissues to school: Please ensure pupils have a supply of tissues with them and understand the importance of disposing of used tissues properly.
- Use your elbow: If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow rather than your hands.
- Avoid touching your face: Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Keep hydrated: Encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the day.

When should you keep your child at home?
The NHS advise that pupil can continue coming to school if they have a cough, sore throat, runny rose or feel under the weather. If a pupil is absent for any of these reasons, it will be unauthorised. However, there are some medical reasons to keep your child at home. Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours. Further information can be found at NHS – Is my child too ill for school?

Understanding Attendance Codes on the School Register
We would also like to clarify how pupil absences and lateness are recorded on our school registers. Schools are legally required to use specific attendance codes in line with Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance. These codes are not chosen by individual schools and must accurately reflect the circumstances surrounding a pupil's absence or lateness. Some of the codes parents may see include:

O – Unauthorised Absence
This code is used when a pupil is absent without authorisation, for example where the reason for absence is not provided or the absence is not accepted as authorised by the school. Unauthorised absence can include illnesses where the child could have attended school.

I – Illness
This code is used when a pupil is unable to attend school due to a medical illness. Illness absences are normally authorised based on the information provided by parents. Where there are genuine concerns or repeated patterns of absence, the school may request reasonable supporting evidence.

U – Arrived After the Register Has Closed
This code is used when a pupil arrives at school after the morning registration period has closed. At Wednesfield Academy, this means arriving after 9.00am.

It is important to understand that these are statutory attendance codes and Wednesfield Academy is legally required to record attendance in accordance with Government Guidance.

Attendance, the Local Authority and Legal Responsibilities
Wednesfield Academy is required to share pupil attendance information with both the Local Authority and the Department for Education on a weekly basis. Our priority will always be to work positively with families to improve attendance, remove barriers to regular school attendance and avoid situations where parents face legal action. However, there are occasions when parents continue to take their children out of school without authorisation, including holidays during term time, visits abroad or other periods of persistent absence.

Where attendance concerns remain unresolved, the Local Authority may take legal action against parents. This can result in prosecution and financial penalties. We would like to make parents aware that, following court proceedings in October 2026, two families received fines of over £600 each in relation to school attendance. This is a significant financial consequence that we would always hope to help families avoid through early communication, support, and improved attendance.

We would like to remind parents that attendance below 90% is classified as persistent absence. This is a significant concern because pupils who regularly miss school are at risk of falling behind academically and missing important learning opportunities. We therefore ask all parents and carers to:

- Reconsider booking holidays during term time, as these will not be authorised.
- Ensure that family visits abroad and other arrangements take place during the school holidays.
- Contact the school promptly every day that their child is unable to attend.
- Provide accurate reasons for all absences and any reasonable supporting evidence requested by the school.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time every day.

Every day in school matters. Regular attendance provides pupils with the best opportunity to achieve their potential, develop positive relationships and make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. We recognise that there will be times when children are genuinely unwell or families experience difficult circumstances. We are always keen to work with parents and carers to provide support wherever possible.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support, this could not be done without highly supportive, caring parents. We look forward to celebrating your child and Wednesfield Academy's achievements with pupils and finishing the term on a real high!

Yours faithfully



Mr Phillips
Headteacher