



## ED0011D - Attendance (Student)



### Introduction

When students join our school, they have often experienced a significant period out of school or significant difficulties within school that have led to greatly reduced attendance. This is due to their complex needs which may impact on their ability to manage the emotional, social and environmental aspects of school life. Several students have co-morbid conditions which may also lead to reduced attendance. In cases such as this, agreement may be made with the Local Authority and the parents for part time attendance for fixed periods of time with the aim to increase their time in education as soon as possible. Our expectation is that all students achieve their full potential and therefore we aim for all of them to achieve 95% attendance given time and a carefully planned transition.

### Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

### Principles and Aims

To maintain and improve upon current attendance levels through a consistent approach to registration and the monitoring of attendance.

To ensure the completion and maintenance of attendance registers. We work in partnership with parents, carers, support agencies to encourage and support all children to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality. Where attendance levels fall, we will work with the Local Authority/social workers to make full use of statutory duties available to encourage

and ensure excellent levels of attendance. On the rare occasions when these efforts fail to improve attendance, the school will actively seek, in liaison with the Education Welfare Service (EWS), the use of legal remedies.

#### Actions

- Celebrate success.
- Monitor attendance rates and offer support to families where issues are arising.
- Keep and maintain accurate records.
- Liaise with stakeholders to improve attendance and outcomes, including the Education Welfare Officer.

## Expectations, Roles and Responsibilities

#### **The headteacher:**

- The implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Working with the parents of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents through all available channels.

#### **The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion'):**

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families.

#### **School Staff**

- The teacher in charge of a class must accurately take a register of attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions within 30 minutes of the session start time. Attendance is record on BromCom.
- The School Admin manager will take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system. They will transfer calls from parents/carers to the teacher or Attendance Champion where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- If there is no School Admin Manager or Headteacher then another member of the school staff will do this and refer to this policy for processes.

#### **Parents/Carers**

A parent/carers' legal responsibility is to ensure that the child attends school. This includes being punctual. When a child is absent it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school at the earliest possible opportunity.

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session in a punctual manner.

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 09:15 on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Assistant Headteacher (SEND/Inclusion).

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body, together with the Chief Operating Officer (COO), Education Director and Headteacher have a responsibility to oversee the schools' attendance and to monitor this. The Governing Body acts as a 'critical friend' and determines targets and the impact of the attendance policies and approaches. The Governing Body should

- Set high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents.
- Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate
- Recognise and promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Make sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for students who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Make sure the school has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs.
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students or cohorts who need it most.
- Work with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and provide support and challenge.
- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluate the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting students' needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, work with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Make sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance.
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues.
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers.
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate.
- Make sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

## **Standards and Monitoring**

The School Administrator will initially monitor attendance.

Children's attendance will be classified in the following way:

- 97% to 100%    Excellent attendance.
- 95% to 97%    Good attendance.
- 92% to 94%    Requires improvement (potential impact on learning).
- Below 90%      Attendance below this level may trigger action by the school.

The Headteacher and Attendance Champion will check the attendance of all children on a half termly basis. At the end of each half term a summary of every child's attendance will be sent home.

Parents/Carers will be informed by letter if their child's attendance falls below 90%. This communication will be supportive and will consider individual circumstances. Persistent levels of attendance below 90% are of concern and will be investigated.

If a child's attendance levels indicates that they are persistently absent, then a TAC meeting will be held, and they will be discussed with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.

Attendance figures are monitored and reported in the Governance reports on a termly basis. Attendance is also reported within the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) which is sent to the Chief Operating Officer and Education Director by the Headteacher on a regular basis.

#### **Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the students it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families.
- Provide regular attendance reports to tutors, to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the governing board and school leaders. Attendance will always be discussed at Student Progress Meetings.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate.

## Record Keeping

Registers and all related correspondence will be kept for a period of six years. Any correspondence regarding concerns about a child's attendance will be kept in the child's individual file. This will be transferred onto the next school at the point of transfer.

## Absence Reporting

The school operates a 30-minute registration window. School registration starts at 9:00am although due to transition plans of many students, some start times will differ (see individual transition plans for each individual student). Afternoon session registration begins at 12.30 and, as with the morning session, a 30-minute registration window is included. As already noted, student timetables will differ due to the personalised nature of our learning programmes.

#### **The Attendance Register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 09:00 and ends at 15:30.

Students must be engaged in their first lesson within 30 minutes of its start time.

The register for both morning and afternoon sessions will be taken immediately at the start of the scheduled lesson and will be kept open for 30 minutes.

#### **Unplanned Absence**

The student's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:15, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school Admin Manager who can be contacted via telephone on 01260 294909.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

#### **Planned Absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. A copy of, for example, an appointment card will be considered as evidence and should be provided to the School Admin Manager.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### **Lateness and Punctuality**

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

If there are ongoing concerns about punctuality a TAC meeting will be instigated by the Assistant Headteacher to look at what support can be put into place for the child/family to encourage them to attend on time.

#### **Following up Unexplained Absence**

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact relevant agencies such as the police or children's social care.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the student was absent.
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's youth offending team officer.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance.

- Identify whether the student needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals.

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via email communication, telephone communication and the student termly report.

### **Approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher will allow students to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad.
- Attending an interview.
- Study leave.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a student to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school Admin Manager. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a student to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the student is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority.
- Attending work experience.
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed.

### **Sanctions**

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### **Penalty Notices**

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice. If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that student.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the student must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the student's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same student, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

#### **Notices to Improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the student attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the student's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#).
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

#### **Term-time Leave Requests, including Holidays**

Parents/carers have no entitlement to take their child out of school during term-time. Any requests for term-time leave, up to a maximum of 10 school days in an academic year, must satisfy the following conditions before they will be considered by the Headteacher:

- Exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. forces personnel; significant year-round seasonal employment restrictions (a letter from the employer stating to this effect must be provided); unforeseen family circumstances etc. Financial reasons are NOT an exceptional circumstance.
- Requested in advance of the proposed dates (at the earliest possible opportunity and at least four weeks' notice).
- A definite return date provided – **any child not returned to school on the expected date will be considered a 'Child Missing from Education' and will be referred to the Education Attendance Service/Welfare Service as a**

safeguarding concern. This may trigger a home visit and involvement from the local police.

## Child Missing Education

Schools have a key role to play in ensuring that children do not become CME. Schools are responsible for maintaining attendance registers and monitoring student attendance in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) Regulations (England) 2006 and the Education (Student Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016. To comply with these regulations school must notify when they are about to remove a student from a school roll and should only delete a student from the roll when:

- The Headteacher has received confirmation from the child's parent/carer that he/she has been registered at another school, and there is no School Attendance Order in place
- The child has ceased to attend the school and is no longer ordinarily resident at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school and the school has received confirmation from another school that the child is now on its roll.
- The Headteacher has received written confirmation from the child's parent that the child is to be electively home educated - in such circumstances the school should notify the Access and Inclusion Service using the prescribed procedure and referral for
- The child has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 4 weeks and both the Headteacher and the local authority have failed after reasonable enquiry, to locate him/her.
- The child has not returned to school within 10 days following the expiry of an agreed extended leave of absence (more than 10 days) and the head teacher has established that the child's absence is not the result of sickness or any unavoidable cause and the Headteacher and the local authority have both failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate him/her.
- The child, having been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, has not been offered a place in reception
- A school medical officer has certified that the child is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school
- The child has died.
- The child will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and he/she intends to leave
- The child has been permanently excluded from the school and the deadline for lodging an appeal has elapsed, or the parents have notified the school in writing that they do not intend to appeal.
- The local authority has named another school in a School Attendance Order or where a School Attendance Order has been revoked because alternative arrangements for the child's education have been made.
- 12. The child is detained in pursuance of a final court order or order of recall and will be continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than 4 months and the Headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child will return to that school at the end of that period he/she is detained following a court order or order of recall.

When Esland Daven school removes a student from its roll (other than as part of the normal transfer process or following a permanent exclusion) the school will inform the placing authority by completing a Notification of Removal from School Roll E-form. If this removal from roll form does not include a named destination for the child, the case may be treated as a CME.

### **Cross Border Arrangements**

Esland Daven school have signed Service Level Agreements with various Local Authorities. LAs have agreed protocols regarding children who attend school in one LA but reside in another. According to the terms of these protocols if a child who attends a school in one LA becomes CME the CME officer will notify and liaise with the CME officer of the LA in which the child resides.

## Supporting Students who are Absent or Returning to School

We acknowledge that at times our students absent due to complex barriers to attendance, including their emotional health and wellbeing. We will draw on our clinical expertise to work with children and their families to ensure that a programme of support is in place to ensure that they are able to continue learning. This will be agreed through a TAC (Team Around the Child) meeting. When students have been absent from school for a significant period of time during complex factors we will support a return to school using a bespoke and personalised education pathway, utilising our Turning the Curve approach.

## Appendix 1

### Appendix 1 - Term time leave advice to parents and carers.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the [Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) and came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

The amendments made it clear that Headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave must be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance.

There is no formal definition offered for exceptional leave at present by the Department for Education (DfE). However, from discussion with the DfE and professional associations, it is suggested that exceptional leave would be:

- Rare
- Significant
- Unavoidable
- Short

(National Association of Headteachers, 2014)

Taking a child on holiday in term time interrupts learning and teachers must spend time helping children catch up when they return. Parents/Carers should arrange holidays during the school holiday periods. The school is open 190 days per year which leaves 175 days of the year for holidays.

#### Government website link

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview>

## Appendix 2- Example

### Appendix 2 - Request for Term-Time Leave

Class

I wish to apply for term time leave for:

Name

from

to

inclusive

The Exceptional Reasons for this request are:

Signature

(Parent/Carer)

Date

**Please make your request prior to making any bookings and at least four weeks before the anticipated leave date.**

## Appendix 3 - Example

Appendix 3 - Approval Letter

Dear

**Name of Child:**

**Re: Request for Term Time Leave**

Thank you for your request for term time leave.

I am in agreement this is for exceptional reasons and have authorised this leave.

The leave is from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Should the leave be extended for any reason, the extension may be regarded as unauthorised absence which may be used in any legal action for poor school attendance.

Signature

(Headteacher)

Date

## Appendix 4 - Example

**Appendix 4 - Letter of refusal.**

Dear

**Name of Child:**

**Re: Request for Term Time Leave**

You have requested \_\_\_\_\_ School days leave.

Your request for term time leave has been carefully considered but unfortunately it has not been possible to authorise it for the following reasons:

The reasons are not considered exceptional The leave has not been requested in advance

Other

**Please be aware that if you decide to proceed with the unauthorised term time leave the school will inform the Local Authority who make take further action.**

Signature

**(Headteacher) Date**