



The Eaglewood School

“Raising Aspiration and Changing Lives”

Attendance Policy

Subject and Version of Document:	Attendance Policy – 2021
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Persons/Committees consulted whilst document in draft:	Headteacher and Governing Body
Date Policy agreed:	Dec 2021
Date of next review/update and by whom:	The Eaglewood Governors
Copy obtainable from and/or distribution:	PA to the Headteacher
Date document issued:	Dec 2023
Responsibility for dissemination to new staff:	Line Managers
Headteacher Target Audience:	All Staff; All Students; Parents/Carers; Commissioning Schools; Local Authorities

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum biennially.

Policy Aims

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils/students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training

Linked Policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Recognition, Relationship and Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher

- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Tutors

Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on Arbor on a daily basis, using the correct codes.

Admin Team

School Admin Team are responsible for taking calls from parents about absence and ensure tutors are aware of the reason for the absence. They will also support tutors in the recording of attendance on Arbor.

The Student

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.

The Parent/Carer

- Inform the school on the first day of absence before 9am and in cases where students use school transport, transport should be contacted in advance of pickup.
- Ensure that their child leaves in good time for school.
- Notify the school, using the Leave of Absence form, of any planned absences well in advance.
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by phone on the first and subsequent days of absence
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Recording Attendance

Attendance Register

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

We will take our attendance registers during tutor time and at the start of each lesson. It will mark whether every student is:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 8.30am each school day unless otherwise agreed.

Unplanned Absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible.

Parents/carers should notify the school by phone on 01425 460994 or email admin@eaglewoodschool.co.uk in the event of an unplanned absence.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide 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/carers 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/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

We encourage parents/carers 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.

Please phone us on 01425 460994 or email admin@eaglewoodschool.co.uk to make arrangements for a planned absence.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

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

We will monitor punctuality and look at cases of ongoing issues individually and implement plans to support the student to get into school on time.

Following up Absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

Reporting to Parents/Carers

School reports sent out prior to the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays will include students' attendance record for the preceding term.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for Term Time Absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

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

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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 parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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

Reducing Persistent Absence

Absences are closely monitored by our Attendance Officer and plans are put in place to meet individual needs. Bespoke interventions will be put in place dependent on the needs of the student. We use a 'Ones to Watch' system to monitor attendance and follow up with phone call and letters home and in extreme cases parents/carers may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Legal Sanctions

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/code-of-conduct-issuing-penalty-notices-for-unauthorised-absence-from-schools.pdf>

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for Improving Attendance

- Offer a clear vision for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by staff, students and families.
- Make sure staff, students and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.
- Expect good attendance and punctuality from all members of the school community and make sure that students understand its importance.
- Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. Empower staff to take responsibility for attendance.
- Recognise that attendance as an important area of school improvement. Make sure it is resourced appropriately (including through effective use of pupil premium funding) to create, build and maintain systems and performance.
- Have a designated attendance champion in the senior leadership team with clearly assigned responsibilities which are identified within the attendance policy, escalation of procedures and school improvement plan.
- Make sure staff receive continued professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively.

Attendance Monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors student absence on a weekly basis.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

The student's parent/carer is expected to call the school each day their child is ill.

If a student's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Attendance data is collected on Arbor and is monitored using in school spreadsheets used for internal purposes to:

- Track the attendance of individual students.
- Identify whether there are particular students groups whose absences may be a cause for concern.
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.



Appendix 1 – Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

- **Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm** Present in school during registration.
- **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

- **Code B: Off-site educational activity** This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
- **Code D: Dual Registered** - at another educational establishment This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.
- **Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment** This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.
- **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity** This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
- **Code V: Educational visit or trip** This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.
- **Code W: Work experience** Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work

experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that 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 justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

- **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school** Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made** If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
- **Code H: Holiday authorised by the school** Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
- **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)** Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

- **Code M: Medical or dental appointments** Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
- **Code R: Religious observance** Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
- **Code S: Study leave** Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.
- **Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence** A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence codes are as follows:

- **Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.** If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give

retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

- **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided** Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).
- **Code O: Absent from school without authorisation** If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
- **Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed** Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

For the school year 2020 to 2021, a new category has been added to record instances when a pupil is 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. See here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year> for further information, including advice on the application of code X.

Code X: not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) (This code is not counted as an absence in the school census)

This code is used to record sessions where the pupil's travel to or presence at school would conflict with:

- guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England or the Department of Health and Social Care or
- any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Schools should also continue to use code X to record when a pupil not of compulsory school age is not expected to attend as detailed below.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

- **Code X: Not required to be in school** This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
- **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances** This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
 - The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
 - The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
 - A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
 - This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
 - The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity). This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.
- **Code Z: Pupil not on admission register** This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
- **Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure** This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils

Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.