



Attendance Policy
Endeavour Learning Trust

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*Throughout this document we have used the term ‘families’ to refer to our children’ parents, carers or those that hold parental responsibility (PR)’, including the Corporate Parent for those to whom that applies.

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1. Statement of Intent

Endeavour Learning Trust is committed to ensuring all children have regular and full attendance and the importance of this is understood by children and their families. Government research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment and good attenders make better progress, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for transitions from our schools into further and higher education, training and employment.

Absence may also mean that a child is more vulnerable to safeguarding risks, such as child exploitation.

As a trust, we work hard to create a culture where children want to attend and all our schools invest in working with families to identify and remove barriers to full attendance.

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- The Education Act 2002 (Non-attendance prosecutions via the local authority also come under the Education Act 1996)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Working together to improve school attendance (2022)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and latest amendment 2016

This policy relates to many other trust policies and, in particular, the following:

- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The board of trustees will have overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, age, disability, gender reassignment, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Promoting a culture where calm, dignity and structure encompass every space and activity.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Ensuring this policy is published on the school website.

Our schools will:

- Ensure attendance is prioritised and given a high profile, acknowledging good attendance is everyone's responsibility.

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- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities, including follow up on any non-attendance with no contact on the first day of absence with a phone call and / or home visit.
- Consider each request for leave in line with guidance, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision.
- Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process.
- Act promptly to address absence and punctuality issues, in particular persistent absence, with a specific focus on immediate support for vulnerable learners.
- Seek advice and involve other external agencies if we believe there could be wider safeguarding issues surrounding the child.
- Communicate clear and transparent processes around management of attendance, including rewards and intervention, including legal action.
- Work closely with families and maintain regular communication where there are barriers to attendance, including home visits

Families will:

- Ensure their child/children attends school regularly and punctually.
- Inform the school of any reason why their child is absent or late.
- Work closely with the school where there are issues around attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure schools have up to date contact details for those with parental responsibility and emergency contacts.

Children will:

- Always attend school for the duration of the school day, unless of an avoidable reason preventing them to do so.
- Attend school and lessons on time.

3. Types of absence

Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from families.

Authorised absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. If a school has followed its attendance procedures and a pupil continues to have unauthorised absences, the school may see seek advice from the local authority or request legal interventions.

It is the Headteacher's responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from families

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before an absence is authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription, appointment card or similar. Families should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.

Whilst a pupil may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons. All our schools will always work with families (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

Each school has a designated member of staff who monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Families are expected to inform school in the morning as soon as is possible if their child is going to be absent due to ill health or for any other unavoidable reason.

For children who are absent with no reason provided, schools will contact families to establish a reason. This may include home visits.

Persistent absence:

Attendance of below 90% is considered to be in the persistent absence category. Children who are persistently absent will be monitored and schools will ensure that an individual plan to support them will be implemented.

In situations of persistent unauthorised absence, a referral will be made to the local authority to consider a penalty notice fine or legal proceedings for a prosecution under s.444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Leave during term time

Any absence during term time can affect pupil's education and progress as much as any other absence. If leave is being requested for a holiday or extended leave abroad, approval should be obtained from the head teacher before making any bookings.

Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides,
- and**
- the head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and schools may request legal sanctions such as a penalty notice.

Religious absence

Schools will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, eg Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register. The day authorised will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.

Children with medical needs who have difficulty attending school

Statutory government guidance: Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions emphasises the role of schools in ensuring that children with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other children. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these children, whether their condition is short or long term.

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All our schools will work with families and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be in the form of specific support or resources used within school or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment.

When a pupil has been absent from school for an extended period, staff and other support agencies will work with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

Children missing education (CME)

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education.

If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. In such cases, school should undertake a home visit, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

4. Alternative provision

There is a range of circumstances when children might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school.

During the time that a pupil is attending an alternative provision, the main schools retains responsibility for overseeing attendance and safeguarding and will regularly communicate with the alternative provision to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil, including attendance reports.

5. Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. When children miss the start of the day, they can miss out on vital work and routines which can impact their learning significantly.

Where punctuality is an issue, staff will work with children and families to identify the reasons and look to implement support to improve punctuality.

If a pupil continues to be late after the registers close, there may be further sanctions under unauthorised absence.

6. Registers

The Register is a legal document which must be completed fully and on time at AM and PM registration and then for every lesson throughout the day. Should a pupil not be in registration, they should be marked absent; however, if staff are aware of any appointments elsewhere, in or out of school, these should be recorded using the relevant code.

All schools follow the Department for Education guidance on the use of attendance codes and do not deviate from this.

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If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is missing from the lesson, then they should notify the Senior Leadership Team and DSL immediately.

7. Strategies for promoting high attendance

School Leaders promote a variety of strategies for high attendance. All schools refer to the strategies set out in the DfE guidance for improving school attendance.

[Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022](#)

All schools provide further details on the strategies they use to support children in the appendix of this policy.

Endeavour Learning Trust monitors Trust-wide attendance data to identify trends and patterns as part of our commitment to ensuring full attendance for all children. Attendance data is regularly reported on and shared with Trustees.

8. Legal interventions

Our schools will always work hard to establish and maintain an effective partnership with parents to ensure full attendance. Where attendance is a concern, schools will ensure appropriate support is identified and implemented, where appropriate and where possible. We expect that all families will engage positively with support and that attendance will improve as a result.

However, where this has not been successful, in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct, we may request that the local authority issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence.

9. School Procedures

Taking a register

It is a teacher's safeguarding responsibility to take an accurate register of the children for the statutory reporting of attendance AM and PM sessions within the day. Teachers are also required to check attendance after the morning break transition.

The statutory reporting of attendance for the AM mark is 8.55am and for the PM mark is 1:00pm.

- Registers should always be completed on SIMS using the following codes:
- Present = /
- Late = L – enter minutes in the pop-up box
- Absent = N

In the event that SIMS cannot be accessed, paper registers should be completed and returned immediately to the Inclusion Co-ordinator in the Reset classroom.

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Safeguarding

The school reserves the right to invite parents into the school to discuss any attendance issues that raise potential safeguarding concerns. In addition, if the school suspects that a pupil may be at potential risk as a result of their absence from school the safeguarding team reserves the right to refer these concerns to the appropriate external agencies, i.e. – social care, police. The school will inform parents/carers if a referral is to be made. However, this may not be appropriate in every circumstance depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern and a referral may be made without informing the parent/carer.

Reporting a child's absence (parent to school)

All parents/ guardians are expected to report their child's absence to school on a daily basis. To report an absence, parents should contact the school directly on 01772 421599 before 8:55am with a detailed explanation for the absence.

Once the reported absence has been received by school, parents/guardians will receive an acknowledgement of the reported absence through ParentApp Connect. Please note that this acknowledgement of receipt does not mean that the absence has been authorised by the school.

Parents should be aware that the decision whether to authorise an absence or not rests with the school. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents before a decision is made to authorise the absence. This may be in the form of a prescription, an appointment card or similar.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school, causing a pattern of non-attendance. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend school it is better for a parent to contact the school to enable both to work together to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home

If a child is absent from school and a parent does not report it, the school will carry out a first day absence procedure. This will involve:

- Contacting you by text message or telephone.
- Contacting you by letter.
- If necessary, carrying out a home visit.

If you do not currently have access to your ParentApp Connect account please call the school Office on 01772 521599 and they will be able to give you your login details.

Reporting a child's absence (school to parent)

When a pupil does not attend school, we will respond in the following manner:

- When a parent fails to report the absence, the school will telephone the contact numbers of all persons listed on the school data system
- If parents cannot be reached by telephone school will send a ParentApp Connect message by 9:30am to inform parents that their child is not in school.

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- Failure to provide an explanation for 5 days of the start of the absence will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. In these circumstances, legal interventions may be considered
- In addition to the attempts made from school, home visits are also regularly conducted in conjunction with safeguarding
- If attendance is a cause for concern, parents could be invited to attend a meeting at school to discuss the situation
- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, not the parent to decide whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Such decisions will be made in accordance with government regulations and guidance

There are times when we need to contact parents, to keep them informed of school business or if a child is injured or ill. Therefore, it is important that we are updated with contact numbers at all times. Parents are responsible for providing updated contact numbers as and when necessary.

How we manage lateness

All children are to be in school before 8:55am. Registers are marked at the beginning of the morning session at 8:55am. If a child is not present in the lesson at this time they will receive a late mark. At 9.30am the registers will be closed, in accordance with the regulations, if a pupil arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on-site, this will not count as a 'present mark' and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If a pattern emerges parents will be invited to meet with the Attendance Team, alternatively parents can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting their child to school on time. All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the Court, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.

Children who arrive at school after 8.45am, must register at Before/Afterschool Club entrance. A sanction will be issued for lateness by children in Year 5 and Year 6.

Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered an unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action. Parents of children who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time timekeeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and where support may be offered. If support is not appropriate or is refused and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness or unauthorised absences, then a request will be submitted to Lancashire County Council to issue parents with a Penalty Notice.