



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## 2024

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

## 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 (2024)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Working together to improve school attendance (2024)
- The Education (Child 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

## Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees will have overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the Trust.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the Trust’s ethos and policies.
- Ensuring all schools within the Trust have the necessary resources in place to ensure effective systems for promoting positive attendance and fulfilling responsibilities outlined in statutory guidance.
- Have regard to relevant statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education, when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Our schools will:

- Ensure attendance is prioritised and given a high profile, acknowledging good attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- 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.
- Analyse attendance data to identify trends and patterns to provide tailored intervention where attendance needs to improve.
- Consider each absence in line with guidance, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised, including requesting 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 children.
- 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.

## **Attendance expectations**

The school has high expectations for children's attendance and punctuality, and will ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to families.

Children will be expected to:

- Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend every timetabled lesson.

School day begins at 08:45

Morning registration opens at 08:50

Morning registration closes at 09:20

Afternoon registration is taken at 12:35

### **What happens if your child is late?**

Punctual arrival at school is expected every day. Registers will remain open for a maximum of thirty minutes. Where children arrive at school after the school day begins, but before the registers close, they will be marked as late, by using the L code. If your child arrives at school after the school day begins, they must sign in at Reception.

If your child is going to be late for school, where possible families should contact the school office and advise us of the reason for your child's lateness. Where school have not been made aware of a reason, children and/or their families will be asked for the reason for their lateness. This will then be recorded on the register as an additional note.

If your child has an unavoidable medical appointment that will cause them to be late, please let us know in advance by either calling the school or using ClassCharts/Arbor to communicate the reason. Where deemed appropriate, this will be authorised and the code M will be used to mark the register. Proof of medical appointments may be requested by school.

Where a child arrives after the morning register closes due to lateness, they will be marked as U. This will count as one session of unauthorised absence. Please note that the school can apply to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice for any student that receives 10 or more 'U' codes for lateness in a ten-week rolling period. This may result in families receiving a fine of up to £160 per parent/per child.

### **SECONDARY ONLY**

Punctuality to each lesson is monitored throughout the day. Where a child is regularly late to lessons whilst in school, staff will work with parents and the child to ascertain reasons and provide support to ensure punctual attendance to every lesson is established. This might include use of sanctions where deemed appropriate.

School will closely monitor punctuality and families of any students who are late on a regular basis will be contacted and asked to attend a meeting to discuss the effects of their child's poor punctuality. School will work with families to try and improve attendance by putting appropriate interventions in place.

## Absence procedures

If a child is absent from school for any reason, families must inform school as soon as possible on the first day of absence by phone call or using ClassCharts/Arbor. If you do not provide a reason for absence, school will contact families regarding your child being absent.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

If staff are unable to reach the priority contacts to ascertain a reason for absence then contact will be made with the additional emergency contacts provided by families in order to establish a reason for absence.

### Home visits

School may undertake a home visit as part of the first day response to absence or where there are concerns about attendance and/or safeguarding. This is to ensure the safeguarding of the child, to learn more about family circumstances and any barriers to attendance and/or to offer appropriate support.

## 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. It is important to understand the difference between authorised, unauthorised, persistent and severe absence.

The register is a legal document which needs to be completed in line with the codes set out in statutory guidance. These codes can be found in the appendix of this policy as well as in the statutory guidance [here](#).

### Authorised absence

Morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a good reason such as illness or medical appointment that is unable to be outside of school time. Where our schools have agreed to a child being absent from school for part of the week or day, we will treat this absence as authorised (e.g. Reintegration timetable).

### Unauthorised absence

Those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given e.g., truancy, unexplained absence, students kept off school unnecessarily. This type of absence can lead to the involvement of the Local Authority.

### Persistence absence

An absence authorised or unauthorised which exceeds 10% or more schooling across the school year. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. Families may be

invited to attend a meeting with relevant staff around intervention and support. Legal interventions may also be used where applicable.

### Severe absence

Severe absence is when a child's overall absence equates to 50% or more of their possible sessions. School acknowledge there may be exceptionally rare circumstances behind severe absence which would be authorised, for example a long-term serious illness.

Severe absence can leave children at risk of poorer outcomes in their future as well as leave children vulnerable to safeguarding risks such as exploitation. In every case of severe absence school will ensure an individual plan of support is in place, including where relevant, support from external agencies and legal interventions.

### Leave during term time

The school will only grant a child a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect families to contact the headteacher in writing as soon as they are aware of the need for leave.

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

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

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the child's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Any absence during term time can affect child's education and progress as much as any other absence.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised.

### Holidays

Holidays during term time will not be authorised and where these meet the legal threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days) over a ten-week period, school will apply to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice to be issued.

### Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the child normally lives with and the leave is to enable the child to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. university or college.

### **Study leave for a public examination**

The school may grant leave of absence for a child to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the child normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for children who want to continue to come into school to revise.

### **Absence in exceptional circumstances**

Exceptional circumstances will include when a child is unable to attend because of the following reasons as outlined in the statutory guidance

- There is a lack of access arrangements.
- Pre-arranged transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within walking distance. An example might be a taxi funded by the Local Authority. This does not apply to individual travel arrangements within families or public transport.
- There is widespread disruption to travel.
- Part of the school premises is closed, and the child cannot be practicably accommodated.
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- The child is in criminal justice detention.
- Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited.
- Any other avoidable cause that makes attendance impossible.

Where a child is pregnant, leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific facts and circumstances of each case. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher based on the individual case and needs of the child involved.

### **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 family is a member. This will be coded as R.

### **Childs 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 child's 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.

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 child 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.

### **Families travelling for occupational purposes**

A mobile child is a child where their family is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the child is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose family is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. Absence would be coded as T.

School will not unnecessarily ask for proof that the family is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.

### **Young Carers**

Being a young carer can make young people feel good about themselves and proud of the useful skills they learn. However, many young carers don't see themselves as carers and miss out on getting the help and support they often so desperately need and deserve.

Young carers take on caring responsibilities not just occasionally but as part of their everyday lives, often over a long period of time, meaning they also often miss out on opportunities that other children have to play, learn and be young, including attending school.

If you feel your child is a young carer, please contact school to find out how school can support your family, including with attendance.

### **Children missing education (CME)**

If a child has stopped attending school and their location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the child's name from the register. A referral will be made to the Local Authority Children Missing Education team.

### **Alternative provision**

On occasion, it is necessary for a child to attend Alternative Provision. The rationale for this must be very strong and the decision made must be beneficial to the young person involved. The school assumes full responsibility for the safety, welfare and progress of all children in alternative provision on the roll of the school. Regular monitoring checks are to be completed and documented by the school and the decision must be constantly under review.

### **Part-Time Timetables**

All children of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where there is a medical reason or it is highlighted in an EHCP, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. Where a medical condition prevents a child from attending full-time education, a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

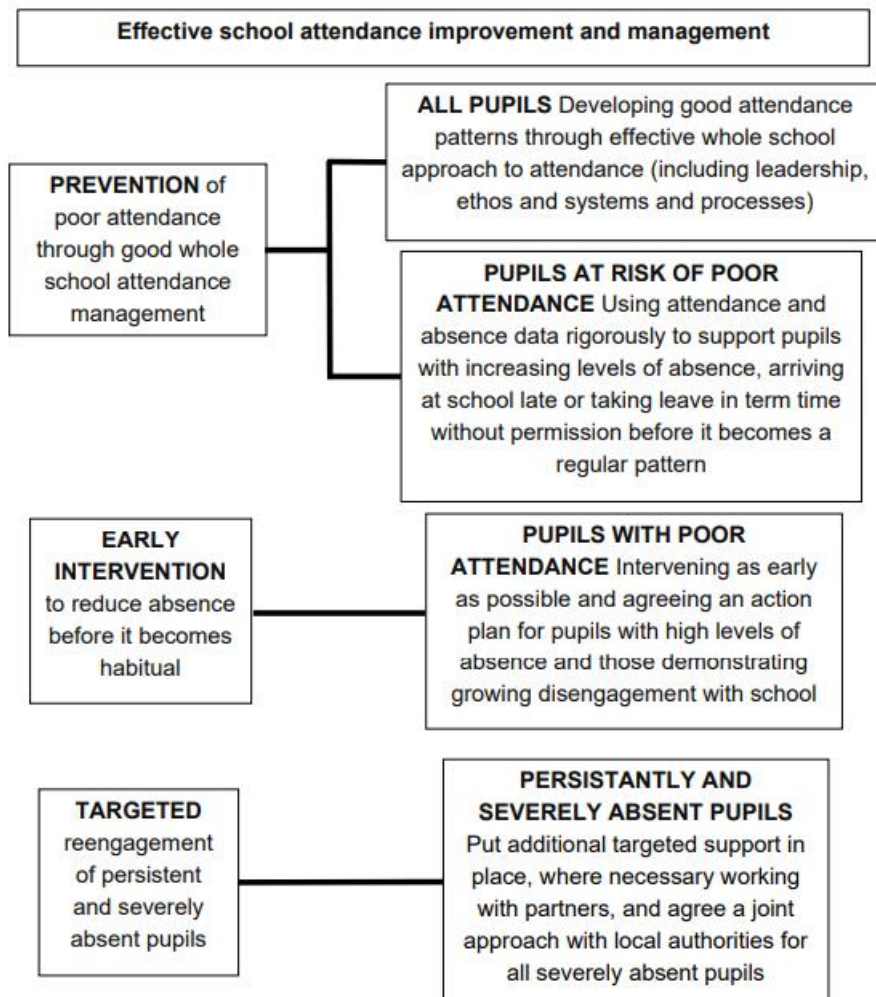


A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the child is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the child and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable, a school has agreed to a child being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised, using code C2.

## Strategies for promoting high attendance

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.

We use a holistic approach to securing the best possible attendance for all our children based on the model below.



## 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.

Schools, Trusts and Local Authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are:

- Attendance contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices

Where these interventions are used, it should be clear that it is the most appropriate intervention to change parental behaviour and in making the decision to use an intervention, headteachers and local authority officers should have regard to their safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## Document Control

This policy derives from the Trust's Attendance Strategy approved by Trustees in Spring 2024. It will be reviewed on an annual basis for the beginning of each academic year.

## Appendix 1:

### Attendance codes

CODE	Definition
/\	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure