



Star

NURTURING TODAY'S **YOUNG PEOPLE**,
INSPIRING TOMORROW'S **LEADERS**

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Eden Boys' School, Birmingham



Document control

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Key information for parents

School starts at	08:00
School ends at	15:00
School registers are closed after 30 minutes after which time, unless a satisfactory reason can be evidenced, the absence will be unauthorised and could lead to legal interventions Registers close at	8:30
The Senior Leader responsible for championing attendance (Attendance Champion) is	Andrea Stephens
The Senior Leader responsible for championing attendance (Attendance Champion) can be contacted by e-mailing	Andrea.Stephens@ebbham.staracademies.org
The school will always prioritise support over legal interventions. However, the school has a duty of care to inform parents that do not respond to the advice and support offered legal interventions will be pursued. Details of advice for parents from the local authority can be found by following the link.	https://www.birmingham.gov.uk

Introduction

1. The School Attendance and Punctuality Policy operates within the context of the school's mission statement. It is the aim of leaders to support every pupil to attend school each day in order to fulfil their academic and social potential.
2. To realise this aim, the school will work in partnership with parents/carers, the local authority, and outside agencies to offer pupils support in maintaining excellent attendance. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Improving attendance is everyone's business: effective communication and joined-up working are paramount. Excellent attendance is a pre-requisite of academic success. The school will ensure that parents are kept well-informed about the link between attendance and attainment and that when academic progress is jeopardised, this message is clearly reiterated, and support is offered to remove any existing or emerging barriers to attendance.
3. School leaders will ensure a calm, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment where pupils want to be present and are eager and ready to learn.
4. The school will operate on a support first basis, giving each parent opportunities to address any issues before using legal intervention as a last resort. Leaders should expect high standards, monitor patterns of attendance, listen to parents to understand barriers and facilitate and formalise support where necessary. Enforcement and the use of legal interventions should only be considered where there is evidence of a lack of parental engagement, and it is likely to encourage an improvement in attendance (with the exception of unauthorised leave in term time).



5. The policy should be implemented alongside the Department for Education guidance document 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' and the school's Behaviour Policy which sets out the protocols for the day-to-day management of behaviour, including attendance and punctuality.

Aims

6. To provide clear guidelines about how the school promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance and punctuality.
7. To ensure that all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves, and each other, and strive to attain them.
8. To support the mission, vision and values of the trust and its establishments.

Who is responsible for this policy?

9. The trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory or trust framework. The trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to Star Central, the local accountability board and the principal of each trust school.
10. The local accountability board and senior leadership team at each trust school have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

Definitions

11. 'Session' is a term related to the recording of absence data – a school day usually has two 'sessions' (morning and afternoon), divided by a break, for which attendance must be recorded.
12. '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.
13. 'Unauthorised absence' is where the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for an absence.
14. 'Attendance Champion' is the senior leader responsible for attendance.

Legal duty

15. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special needs the child may have. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.
16. In exceptional circumstances the principal, with the consent of the parent, may consider a temporary reduced timetable. Trust guidance must be followed including the referral being approved by the trust CEO (see attendance handbook for further details).
17. A parent/carer who fails to ensure that their child attends school regularly, without good reason, is guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

School commitment

18. Everyone in school is committed to promoting good attendance and punctuality.



19. All members of staff are made aware of how their role impacts on attendance and punctuality as well as the expectations of them in ensuring consistent application of the policy and the use of absence codes. Mandatory training will support this commitment. The extent and regularity of the training will be proportionate to the role undertaken but the message will be clear that every member of staff can make a difference.
20. The school will listen to and support pupils and parents/carers to achieve good attendance and punctuality, working closely with parents/ carers where absence is a cause for concern.
21. The school strives for 100% attendance for all pupils. **The whole school attendance target is 97%.** If a pupil achieves at least 97% attendance in one whole school year, they will have missed less than 6 days from school.

Responsibilities

22. **Star Academies** will:
 - devise and review the trust Attendance and Punctuality Policy
 - set and review the trust level targets for attendance and punctuality as part of the school's annual operating statement, strategic plan and target setting process
 - advise schools on matters related to school attendance and support as required
 - provide training for all colleagues to make an active contribution to improving attendance aligned to their role and responsibilities
23. The **local accountability board** will:
 - ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the Attendance and Punctuality Policy throughout the school and are understood by parents/carers
 - review the effectiveness of the implementation of the policy in light of the school's termly reports
24. The **principal** will:
 - ensure the school ethos promotes and celebrates good attendance and punctuality
 - ensure strategies are in place to promote and implement the Attendance and Punctuality Policy throughout the school
 - monitor the school's offer to ensure the delivery of a curriculum which is engaging and personalised to the needs of the pupils
 - monitor data on attendance and punctuality via reports from the senior leader responsible for attendance
 - determine, in collaboration with the senior leader responsible for attendance, whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official request form
 - provide the local accountability board with termly reviews on attendance and punctuality, including data about pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
 - set attendance targets during the appraisal process for the senior leader responsible for attendance, link senior leaders, heads of year (secondary schools) or other relevant members of staff directly associated with attendance performance measures
25. The **senior leader responsible for attendance** supported by individual year group **SLT links** will:
 - ensure that the trust attendance strategy is implemented with fidelity
 - lead initiatives to promote the profile of attendance throughout the school including a package of rewards that is valued by pupils. Interrogate and analyse data on attendance and



punctuality on a daily, weekly, half-termly, and termly basis and prepare reports and delegate actions, as required

- oversee the arrangements for pastoral / attendance review meetings and quality assure any action plans
- comply with the Department for Education Statutory Guidance on Children Missing Education (CME) and follow trust protocol as outlined in the attendance handbook
- ensure the school complies with the requirement set out in the local authority's code of conduct when requesting a legal intervention

26. The **attendance officer/administrator/head of year** will:

- monitor attendance on daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and annual basis, contacting parents/carers of pupils who have been identified as at-risk, to challenge absences and encourage an early return to school
- ensure data on attendance and punctuality is displayed in prominent places visible to pupils
- where appropriate, visit the home and/or make a referral to the local authority's education welfare service or contracted equivalent
- issue appropriate sanctions to pupils for whom attendance and punctuality is a cause for concern
- manage the arrangements for pupils who need to attend appointments during school time
- work with the senior leader responsible for attendance to maintain an up-to-date attendance risk register and punctuality risk register of high-risk pupils in designated year groups
- lead pastoral / attendance review meetings and develop an action plan involving the child, parent/carer and, where appropriate, other agencies for pupils whose attendance and/or punctuality falls below the expected level
- co-ordinate the support plan for pupils returning to school after a prolonged absence
- co-ordinate the collation of all the documentary evidence required by the local authority for pursuing a legal intervention

27. **Learning co-ordinators/form tutors/class teachers responsible for registering morning and afternoon sessions** will:

- provide regular advice, encouragement, challenge and support to the class as a whole and individually to pupils about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality using the data provided by the administrative team
- ensure that the statutory attendance register using the school's MIS system is taken at the start of the first session of the school day and once during the second session. In secondary settings, for the purposes of safeguarding, registers should be taken at the beginning of each lesson
- ensure any communications related to attendance and punctuality are provided to the administration team/ attendance officer
- be alert and deal with any signs of disaffection which could result in poor attendance and punctuality and impact on learning and ensure this is recorded and communicated to the pastoral team
- identify absence trends or concerns and raise with the relevant member of administration team/pastoral team staff

28. **Administrative staff** will:

- monitor registration on a daily basis and ensure any missing marks are quickly resolved to ensure pupils are safe



- be the first point of contact for parents/carers and relevant school staff regarding pupil absence and appointments
- collate and issue all attendance and punctuality data on a daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and annual basis to the attendance officer/head of year and senior leader responsible for attendance
- maintain a record of all applications for leave of absence during term time and requests for issuing a penalty notice

29. Parents/carers will:

- be aware that it is an offence for their child to be absent from school without a valid reason
- be aware that only the school can determine if an absence from school is 'authorised'
- ensure their child arrives at school on time, dressed in full uniform, ready and equipped to learn
- inform the school if their child is unable to attend, including the reason for absence and the expected date of return
- ensure that all appointments, where possible, are arranged after school
- avoid arranging holidays during term time
- ensure that all requests for leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances are made by completing the 'Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form'(see [Appendix 1](#)), where possible at least one month in advance ([See term time leave and holidays](#)).
- ensure their child attends all intervention programmes agreed by the school

30. Pupils will:

- aim to achieve 100% attendance and punctuality by arriving to school on time every day
- come to school well prepared and with the right attitude; to enjoy and achieve
- be proud of achieving excellent attendance and punctuality
- be punctual to all lessons
- ensure they are registered for all timetabled lessons and inform the relevant member of staff if they are not able to be registered
- any communication regarding absence should be passed to the relevant member of staff
- speak to the appropriate member of staff if there are any barriers to attending school regularly!

Registration

31. The school will ensure that an attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of the school day and once during the second session. In addition, all secondary school teaching staff must check that the pupils timetabled to be in their lessons are present for each session. On each occasion, they must record whether every pupil is:
- present
 - attending an approved educational activity
 - absent; or
 - unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
32. Registers will be marked using the [Department for Education Attendance and Absence Codes](#)
33. Where appropriate, an agreed internal code can be used to indicate a pupil is being educated on site but not in their usual lesson. The internal code should only be used for lessons not sessions.



Appointments

34. All appointments, where possible, must be arranged after school.
35. Parents/carers should provide advance notice by way of a medical card and/or letter for any time off school required for medical appointments for the session to be authorised.
36. Time away from school as a result of an appointment must be kept to a minimum. Pupils should attend school before and after appointments where possible.

Pupils leaving school during the school day

37. Pupils are not permitted to leave school unescorted during school hours for any reason. This is not limited to, when pupils are suspended or are unwell. Pupils should only be collected from school by an appropriate known adult, ideally a parent or carer. Over the telephone parental consent allowing for a child to walk home alone during school hours is not permitted. The only exceptions to this rule would be:
 - where a pupil is on an agreed, regularly-reviewed, short-term reduced timetable
 - permission is given by parents in writing to attend a scheduled appointment
38. In the event that a pupil cannot be collected from school by an appropriate known adult or parent/carer, the school must make arrangements for the pupil to remain in school until the end of the school day or be taken home in line with the Lone Working Policy (points 28-31). The care of the child must be handed over to an appropriate known adult, ideally a parent/carer, in the family home.
39. If a pupil is displaying dangerous behaviours, the school should contact the Police. Any decisions made in this regard should always be communicated with parents/carers.

Absences

40. On each day of absence, parents/carers must contact school before the morning registration period begins.
41. Where no information has been received, the school will contact the parent/carer of the absent pupil to enquire about the absence.
42. Parents/carers should contact school every day until the pupil returns to school or alternatively indicate the length of the absence and the reasons why it is known the pupil will be unable to attend e.g. recovering from an operation. In these circumstances a 'check in' date must be agreed when the absence will be reviewed.
43. Failure to provide a reasonable explanation within 5 days of the start of the absence will result in the absence being marked as unauthorised. In these circumstances legal interventions may be considered.
44. It is the responsibility of the principal, not the parent/carer, to decide whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Such decisions will be made in accordance with DfE regulations and guidance.



Attendance and absence data

45. The tables below equate percentage attendance to time missed from school.

Table 1: Attendance over one whole school year for each pupil

Attendance	Missed Days
100%	0
98%	Less than 4 days / 8 sessions
97%	Less than 6 days / 11 sessions (school target)
95%	9½ days / 19 sessions
90%	19 days / 38 sessions
85%	28 ½ days / 59 sessions
80%	38 days / 76 sessions

Table 2: Attendance over 5 years for each pupil

Attendance	Missed Weeks
85-90%	19 weeks = ½ year absence from school
80%	38 weeks = 1 full year absence from school

Persistent absence

46. According to the Department for Education guidelines, a pupil will be considered as a persistent absentee if their attendance is 90% or lower (i.e. 10% or more sessions are missed).
47. Any pupil who is at the persistent absence threshold or at risk of moving towards that threshold is placed on the Attendance Risk Register and given priority for intervention.

Severe Absence

48. According to the Department for Education guidelines, a pupil will be considered as a severe absentee if their attendance is 50% or lower (i.e., 50% or more sessions are missed).
49. Any pupil who is at the severe absence threshold is at serious risk of harm. There should be an intensive level of support, and where appropriate challenge, including the use of legal interventions to secure improvement.

Term time leave and holidays

50. The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013 prohibits the principal of a school from granting leave of absence to a pupil, except where an **advance application** has been made by the parent/carers and the principal considers that there are **exceptional circumstances** relating to the application.
51. The request for leave of absence, where possible, must be made at least one month in advance by completing the 'Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form' (see Appendix 1).
- ~~52.~~ For the purpose of defining 'exceptional circumstances' and as a guiding principle only, the principal may consider if the reasons given for requesting leave are **rare, significant, unavoidable and short**.
53. The school will not consider the following to be exceptional circumstances:
- the availability of cheap holidays
 - the availability of the desired accommodation



- an overlap at the beginning or end of the school term
 - the working pattern or availability of parental holiday entitlement
54. Where a leave of absence is granted, the principal will decide the number of school days a child can be away from school, and the agreed date of return to school.
55. Where a leave of absence is **not** granted or where the child fails to return to school by the agreed date following approval of leave of absence, then the principal will pass on the details to the local authority in line with the duty around reporting children missing education.
56. The principal may request the local authority to issue each adult with parental responsibility with a penalty notice for each child for absence from school.
57. In certain circumstances, the school, after notifying the local authority, may decide to remove the child from the roll of the school.

Managing absence/lateness

Daily monitoring

58. **The attendance officer / administrative staff** will:
- ensure that any pupil who arrives after the register has been taken signs in at the reception office noting a time of arrival or minutes late for purposes of safeguarding
 - ensure the attendance register is updated with details of pupils who arrive late including pupils being marked as an unauthorised late if they arrive more than 30 minutes late without an acceptable reason. An unauthorised late can be used to support a legal intervention
 - ensure details of pupils and the reasons for the late arrival are communicated to the learning co-ordinators/form tutors/class teachers, the attendance officer/head of year and senior leader responsible for attendance via the MIS
 - ensure accurate details are noted of parents/carers contacting the school about their child's absence – including the reason for the absence and the likely length of the absence
 - coordinate all parents/carers being contacted by telephone who fail to notify the school of their child's absence
 - send a text to all parents/carers of pupils arriving late to school, informing them of their child's failure to arrive on time and any relevant consequences
 - send a daily email to the principal, the senior leader responsible for attendance, and other relevant staff providing the percentage level of attendance and punctuality each day, broken down by year group and the cumulative attendance for the year at 10am and at the end of the school day
59. **The head of year** (secondary schools) will:
- make phone calls to parents/carers of absent pupils during period 1
 - make follow up calls throughout the day to pupils who have been identified as at-risk, or to challenge absences where appropriate and encourage early return to school
 - authorise appointments for pupils with a poor attendance record or contact parents where the schools is not prepared to condone the absence
 - escalate any absences causing concern to the SLT link



Weekly monitoring

60. Administrative staff will:

- produce weekly attendance and punctuality data for learning co-ordinators/form tutors/class teachers, the attendance officer/head of year and the senior leader responsible for attendance on attendance by class and by pupil
- display weekly data on attendance and punctuality in prominent place visible to pupils in the form of league table to engender a spirit of friendly competition amongst staff and pupils

61. The **attendance officer/head of year** will review the weekly attendance and punctuality data and:

- issue an appropriate sanction to a pupil who has been late more than once (e.g., a detention) and inform parents/carers if appropriate
- contact parents/carers by telephone to inform them of the school's concern regarding attendance or punctuality, particularly if there are patterns to absences or lateness

62. The **senior leader responsible for attendance** will:

- keep an overview of weekly attendance across the school
- agree appropriate intervention strategies with the attendance officer/head of year
- provide an update to the senior leadership team

Half-termly monitoring

63. Administrative staff will:

- produce half-termly attendance and punctuality data for learning co-ordinators / form tutors/class teachers, the attendance officer/head of year and the senior leader responsible for attendance on attendance by class and by pupil

64. The **attendance officer/head of year**, in liaison with the senior leader responsible for attendance, will:

- update the Attendance Risk Register as follows:
 - pupils on 99-100% attendance are on level 0 (no risk of persistent absence)
 - pupils on 98-99% attendance are on level 1 (low risk of persistent absence)
 - pupils on 95-98% attendance are on level 2 (moderate risk of persistent absence)
 - pupils on 92-95% attendance are on level 3 (high risk of persistent absence)
 - pupils on attendance of below 92% are on level 4 (high risk of persistent absence)
- update the Punctuality Risk Register as follows:
 - pupils with no late marks in the previous half-term are on level 0
 - pupils with 1-6 late marks in the previous half-term are on level 1
 - pupils with 7-10 late marks in the previous half-term are on level 2
 - pupils with 11-15 late marks in the previous half-term are on level 3
 - pupils with more than 15 late marks in the previous half-term are on level 4
- arrange a pastoral review meeting with pupils and parents/carers for any pupils placed on Level 4 of the Attendance Risk Register or Punctuality Risk Register to:
 - discuss levels of authorised and unauthorised absences
 - discuss punctuality levels
 - discuss causes for the levels of absence and lateness
 - provide challenge and support to improve attendance and punctuality by the school, parent/carer, pupil and, where appropriate, other external agencies



- set an action plan with achievable and realistic attendance and punctuality targets
- set a review date

65. The **senior leader responsible for attendance** will:

- keep an overview of Attendance Risk Register across the school
- agree appropriate intervention strategies with the Attendance officer/head of year
- agree list of pupils requiring pastoral review meetings
- provide the local accountability board with half-termly data on attendance and punctuality, including data about pupils who are persistent/severe absentees and leave of absence requests and their outcomes

Termly monitoring

66. The **administrative team** will:

- produce termly attendance and punctuality data for learning co-ordinators/form tutors/class teachers (in the case of primary phase), the attendance officer, head of year and the senior leader responsible for attendance on attendance by class and by pupil
- display termly data on attendance and punctuality in a prominent place visible to pupils
- issue letters of concern to parents/carers of pupils with attendance below 96%
- issue letters/certificates of praise and celebration to parents/carers of pupils who achieve 100% attendance and punctuality/significantly improved attendance/attendance above school target

67. The **attendance officer/head of year** will:

- recognise, celebrate and reward pupils who achieve 100% attendance/significantly improved attendance/attendance above the school target each term in assemblies

Vulnerable Pupils

68. The school recognises that some groups of pupils are more vulnerable to poor attendance than others. These groups should be carefully monitored, and intervention should be targeted where additional support is required. In exceptional cases advice can be sought from the relevant Star Central expert.
69. Pupils with medical needs, special educational needs and/or disabilities, young carers, pupils with a social worker or in a receipt of the pupil premium are likely to require more targeted support than pupils outside of these groups. However, schools must never assume that because individual pupils do not belong to these groups that additional support will not be required, and colleagues must remain vigilant.
70. When a pupil with a social worker is absent without good reason, the social worker should be informed of unauthorised absences and support improved attendance. Where schools are considering the use of legal interventions, the view the relevant social worker should be considered although the final decision will be taken by the school in liaison with the local authority school attendance service.
71. The school should inform the youth offending team of any pupils who are under their care and have unexplained absences.



Re-integration of pupils following long term absence

72. The school recognises the key role it can play in ensuring the successful reintegration of pupils returning after a prolonged period of absence.
73. The school will work in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies (if appropriate), to assist a smooth reintegration back into school.
74. All relevant staff will be informed of the child's circumstances and a member of staff will be nominated to oversee the pupil's return.
75. The pupil's peers will also be included to ensure they welcome the pupil back to school and support the reintegration process.

Legal Interventions

76. The school, in consultation with the local authority, where appropriate will exercise its legal powers to address poor attendance in school. Details of the full range of legal interventions available to school can be found in the DfE's '[working together to improve attendance](#)' statutory guidance. Removal from the roll of the school.

Removal from the roll of the school

77. Schools must only remove compulsory school-aged children from the roll of the school under certain circumstances defined in Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
78. Schools must complete the trust's deletion from roll checklist and await approval from the trust's admissions and exclusions team before removing a child from the roll of the school.
79. For removal from roll for elective home education (EHE), schools must follow the trust's EHE guidance and return the completed checklist and await approval from the trust's admissions and exclusions team before removing a child from the roll of a school.
80. Schools are advised to consult with the trust's admissions and exclusions team on any cases where children are missing from school and their whereabouts are not known. This should be done prior to submitting a referral to the local authority's CME team.



Appendix 1: Leave of absence during term time request form

Leave of Absence During Term Time Request Form



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Guidance Notes

- Please ensure this form is completed at least 1 month prior to requesting leave. Completing this form **does not** mean your request has been approved.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013 state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** (see below).
- If your leave of absence is either approved and you fail to ensure that your child returns to school by the agreed date or your child takes leave when your leave of absence request is not approved, then the absence will be marked as 'unauthorised' on the attendance register.
- For such 'unauthorised' absence, you may be liable to be issued with a penalty notice (fine). The fine is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 per parent per child if paid between 21 and 28 days. If one or both parents fail to pay the penalty notice in full, then you may be prosecuted.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no discount.
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered, such as prosecution. If a prosecution is successful parents will have a criminal record.
- For a prolonged unauthorised leave of absence, the school also reserves the right to remove your child from the roll of the school. Where this happens, please be aware that it may not always be possible to re-admit your child to the school.

Exceptional circumstances: In considering whether any 'exceptional circumstances' apply, the Principal / Headteacher will consider if the reasons are **rare, significant, unavoidable** and **short**. The Principal / Headteacher will also take into consideration the factors listed below:

- If the event for which leave of absence is requested can reasonably take place during school holidays
- levels of attendance and unauthorised absence over the last 12 months
- any leave of absence taken previously
- whether the leave is during an assessment period will result in not meeting deadlines
- age and year group of the pupil.

CHILD'S DETAILS

Surname		First Name	
Date of Birth		Year Group	
Address			

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S DETAILS

Surname		First Name	
Relationship to child			



Address (if different to above)			
Telephone no.		Mobile no.	
Email			
DETAILS OF REQUEST FOR LEAVE			
Date of Departure		Date of Return	
No. of School Days Absence		Destination	
Local emergency contact name		Emergency contact number	
Address resident at whilst on leave			
Please provide details and reasons for requesting leave of absence and in particular any exceptional circumstances. If necessary, please provide any documentary evidence in support of your request. 			
I certify that the information provided on this form is correct. I understand that the school reserves the right to make a referral to the local authority for a legal intervention where leave is unauthorised.			
Signature		Date	

– FOR COMPLETION BY THE SCHOOL –

Authorised	YES / NO		
Principal's Signature		Date	
Principal's Name			