

# Attendance Policy



*Believe, Succeed, Together*

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## 1.0 Attendance Policy

### 1.1 The Importance of Attendance

In May 2022, the DfE updated [Improving School Attendance: Support for Schools and Local Authorities](#). The guidance sets out the principles underpinning an effective whole school strategy for attendance and outlines actions schools may wish to consider taking to improve attendance for all pupils, pupils at risk of persistent absence and pupils who are persistently absent. This guidance has been used to develop the Academy's Attendance Policy.

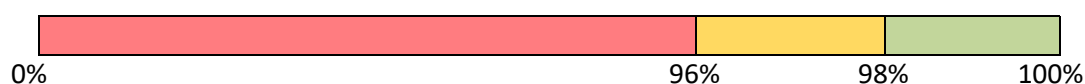
### 1.2 Attendance Champion

Assistant Principal, Mr. M. Cartlidge, [MCartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk](mailto:MCartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk) is the Academy's Senior Leader responsible for attendance and designated 'Attendance Champion'. Mr. M. Cartlidge is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing, monitoring and developing the strategic and operational aspects of the Attendance Policy.
- Managing the escalation of procedures.
- Liaising with relevant external agencies and partners.

### 1.3 Academy Target

The Academy's target for all pupils is to achieve an attendance of **100%** to afford them the best opportunity to fulfil their potential.



% Attendance	Description
100%	Excellent
98.0-99.9%	Good
96.0-97.9%	Average
<96.0%	Below Average

### 1.4 Parental Role

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends **regularly** and **punctually**.

Parents should provide the Academy with up-to-date information about points of contact and those with 'parental responsibility'.

Parents should contact the Academy on **each day** of their child's absence, stating the reason. Failure to inform the Academy of the reason(s) for their child's absence will result in it being classified as 'unauthorised'.

Parents should be aware of the advice in [HSC Guidance on Infection Control](#) and any subsequent information in relation to pandemics e.g. [Covid-19](#)

Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, GP note etc. Medical appointments should be made outside of school time. Where this is not possible, the appointment card should be shown (in advance) to reception staff, so copies can be made. This is not only important in terms of the categorisation of absence, but it also influences whether pupils are eligible to attend Academy trips. In short, if a pupil's attendance falls below the Academy's target (and is not supported by medical evidence) they will not be eligible to attend Academy trips (excluding those required by the curriculum).

Parents should inform the Academy of any relevant factors e.g. bereavement which could affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour.

### **1.5 Pupil Role**

The Academy expects pupils to attend **regularly** (100% attendance) and **punctually** (arrive on time).

In instances where a pupil arrives late to school, Reception staff issue a cross in their Planner. When a pupil accrues three crosses in one term, they are issued with a **1-hour afterschool detention**. In respect to the third cross, and every additional cross, the pupil will be issued with a **1-hour afterschool detention on the day that they arrived late to school**. This system is managed by the Senior Leader responsible for punctuality.

In the case of any absence, pupils in Key Stage 4 **must** catch up with all work missed. This will be monitored by the Senior Leader responsible for attendance and may involve pupils being directed into 'catch up sessions' during break, lunch and afterschool, until such time as the work is caught up.

### **1.6 Unauthorised Absences**

'Unauthorised absences' are those which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. Although not an exhaustive list, such examples include:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained e.g. a message from another parent or child cannot be used to authorise absence.
- Children who arrive late to school.
- Term time holidays.
- Absence which is not supported by medical evidence when requested by the Academy.

All absence **under 92%**, which is not accompanied by a medical certificate, will be classed as 'unauthorised'. Pupils falling into this category of attendance will be immediately investigated by the Local Authority Attendance Officer and, if necessary, taken to court and fined.

### **1.7 Legal Sanctions**

Under existing legislation, parents commit an offence if their child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as 'unauthorised' (those for which the Academy cannot or has not given permission). Depending on circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under **Section 444 and 444B of the Education Act 1996** which could lead to a fine of **£2500** or **imprisonment**.

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution which does not require an appearance in court, whilst still securing an improvement in a pupil's attendance. Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for the period of absence included in the Penalty Notice.

## 1.8 Holidays in Term Time

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** prohibits a Headteacher granting leave of absence to a pupil, except where an application has been made in advance, and the Headteacher considers that there are 'exceptional circumstances' relating to the application.

An **Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time (Appendix 1)** should be emailed to Mr. M. Cartlidge - [MCartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk](mailto:MCartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk).

Please note that if the absence is not authorised, and the holiday is taken, the case will be referred to the Child and Family Early Intervention Team who may issue a Penalty Notice of **£120** (or **£60** if paid within 21 days) to **each** parent for **each** child taken out of school. The pupil will also be required to catch up with all work missed (refer to section 1.3).

## 1.9 Managing Attendance Concerns

### 1.9.1 Graded Support

The Academy manages attendance concerns in a graded way as detailed below.

Level	Threshold	Support
0	96.0-100%	No additional support required.
1	93% -95.9%	A phone call from the pupil's <b>Form Tutor</b> to discuss if there are any emerging issues with subjects, friendship groups, non-participation in clubs etc.
2	90%- 92.9%	A phone call from the pupil's <b>Head of House</b> to discuss if there are any established issues affecting attendance. Where the pupil's previous year's attendance data reveals a trend below the Academy's expectations, the phone call will be replaced with a meeting. Following the call/meeting, the Head of House liaises with the SLT Link, Enrichment Coordinator and SENDCo and/or other relevant professionals regarding the provision of appropriate, supportive intervention.
3	<90%	The <b>Senior Leader</b> with responsibility for attendance monitors and manages pupils using a range of strategies e.g. LA service, Fast-Track Framework, house calls/visits etc.

### 1.9.2 Fast-Track

The Academy manages attendance concerns in line with Southend Borough Council's [School Attendance Guidance](#).

One part of the guidance is concerned with the '**Fast-Track Framework**'. This is a time-focused model which focuses on early intervention in cases of persistent non-attendance and aims to ensure a faster more effective approach to the implementation of strategies to tackle non-attendance and the

underlying causes. Where parents fail to bring about the necessary improvement, legal proceedings are initiated.

### **1.10 Attendance Commendations**

Attendance commendations will broadly involve the following:

- Certificates for 100% attendance during any half-term presented during House assemblies.
- Star (badge) system – Bronze (1 year), Silver (2 years), Gold (3 years) and Platinum (4 years) for 100% attendance during an academic year.
- Letters to parents from the Principal.
- End of term/year special lunches, trips and prizes.

### **1.11 Reporting on Attendance and Punctuality**

Pupils will receive an Attendance Report on a half-termly basis (refer to **Appendix 2**).

### **1.12 Missing Children**

The Academy complies with the DfE statutory guidance - [Children Missing Education](#)

The Academy **must** inform the Local Authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. EHE.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

The Local Authority **must** be notified when the Academy is to delete a pupil from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for deletion are met, and in any event, no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register.

The Academy **must** inform the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of **10** school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the Academy and the Local Authority.

The Academy **must** ensure that any pupil with a Child Protection Plan who is absent without explanation for **2** school days or more is referred to Children's Social Care.

## 1.13 Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School

### 1.13.1 Definition and Provision

This section summarises the key information in the DfE statutory guidance - [Ensuring a Good Education for Children who cannot Attend School because of Health Needs](#)

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- Hospital school - a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- Home tuition - home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- Medical PRUs - LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

### 1.13.2 Duties

#### Local Authority (LA)

The LA **must** arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The Academy has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil.
- Ensure the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- Address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision.
- Have a named officer responsible for the education of children with additional health needs and ensure parents know who this is.
- Have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements to comply with their legal duty towards children with additional health needs.

- Review the provision offered regularly to ensure that it continues to be appropriate for the child and that it is providing suitable education.
- Give clear policies on the provision of education for children and young people under and over compulsory school age.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

### **Academy**

The Academy will:

- Have a named person with responsibility of managing pupils with health needs who cannot attend school – Assistant Principal, Mr. M. Cartlidge.
- Provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of illness for a period of less than 15 school days by liaising with the pupil's parents to arrange appropriate education at school. The Academy will give due consideration to which aspects of the curriculum are prioritised in consultation with the pupil, their family and relevant members of staff.
- Notify the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the Academy for a significant period of time due to their health needs i.e. 15 or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year.
- Work collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of the pupil.
- Ensure the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Arrange appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- Provide teachers who support pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.
- Make reasonable adjustments under pupils' individual healthcare plans (IHCPs), in accordance with the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

### **Parents**

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child where possible.
- Work in partnership with the Academy to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the Academy of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the Academy with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.



## **Pupil**

- Where a pupil has a complex or long-term health issue, the Academy will discuss the pupil's needs and how these may be best met with the LA, relevant medical professionals, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.
- Pupils admitted to hospital will receive education as determined appropriate by the medical professionals and hospital tuition team at the hospital concerned.
- During a period of absence, the Academy will work with the provider of the pupil's education to establish and maintain regular communication and effective outcomes.
- When a pupil is considered well enough to return to school, the Academy will develop a tailored reintegration plan in collaboration with the LA.

## Appendix 1



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### Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 prohibits Headteachers granting leave of absence to a pupil, except where an application has been made in advance, and the Headteacher considers that there are '**exceptional circumstances**' relating to the application.

**A separate application must be completed for each child and a letter must be attached to the application outlining the 'exceptional circumstances' for which a leave of absence is being sought.**

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to their educational progress. A pupil who takes 10 days absence will only attain 94.7% attendance in the academic year. 10 days absence also equates to 50 hours of education.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken, you may be liable for a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Name of Child	
Date of Birth	
Form	
Date of First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Number of Days Requested	
Email Address	

Parental Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **Q1. Am I entitled to take my child out of school for a family holiday?**

No.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school or the alternative provision on a regular basis.

The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to 'fail to secure their child's regular attendance at the school'.

The amendments to the 2006 Regulations remove any reference to family holidays, extended leave and the statutory threshold of 10 school days.

The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence (holiday) during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

The amendments give parents no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time. The Headteacher will determine what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'.

### **Q2. If we decide to take a holiday during term time what should we do?**

The parent with whom the child resides, must apply in writing to the Academy.

The letter/application must explain the 'exceptional circumstances' pertaining to the request for the leave of absence.

### **Q3. What will the Academy do then?**

The Principal will determine whether the 'exceptional circumstances' threshold has been met.

Whether the application is approved or declined, you will receive a written response from the Senior Leader with the delegated authority to manage leave of absence requests – Mr. M. Cartlidge.

### **Q4. What happens if the application is declined but my child still goes on holiday?**

If the holiday goes ahead after the application has been declined, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

You may also be subject to a Penalty Notice for £120.

When your child returns from the holiday, they will be expected to catch up with any work missed. This will be monitored using a 'catch-up form' administered and coordinated by the Senior Leader responsible for attendance.

## Appendix 2

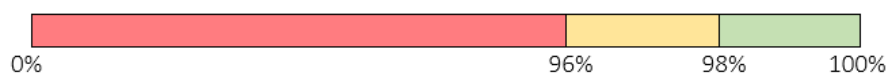


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### Attendance Report Surname, Forename

Attendance 2018/19	Attendance 2019/20	Absence 2019/20
100%	100%	0 Day(s) 0 Lessons

Attendance is colour-coded in the following way:



Forename's attendance of 100% is excellent.

This level of absence over a full academic year would equate to 0 days (0 lessons) and would greatly increase the likelihood that Forename will achieve at least his/her Forecast Grade.

Forename's attendance is in the top 10% of all pupils currently on roll.

The information below shows Forename's attendance during each half-term. The arrows show how his/her attendance compares to the previous half term.

Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
100%	100% ⇄				

In addition to attending school regularly, the Academy also expects pupils to arrive on time in the morning. To date, Forename has arrived late on 0 occasion(s).

If you have any queries regarding your child's attendance, or would like advice and/or support, please email Assistant Principal, Mr. M. Cartlidge - [mcartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk](mailto:mcartlidge@eastwood.southend.sch.uk)