



EPHS

Parent/Carer Guide to attendance

2026/2027

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Ellesmere Park High School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

At **Ellesmere Park High School**, we believe that **excellent attendance and punctuality are fundamental to every student's success.**

Regular attendance enables students to build strong relationships, make progress, develop positive habits, and take advantage of the full range of opportunities available to them at EPHS.

Our ambition is for every student to attend school **every day and on time**, with a school attendance expectation of **96% or above**.

We recognise that some students and families may experience barriers to regular attendance. Our approach is therefore **supportive, relational, and individualized**, whilst maintaining high expectations. We will work closely with students, parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate to remove barriers and improve attendance.

Our shared message is:

Excellent Attendance = More Learning = More Progress = Better Outcomes = Better Life Chances

Our Attendance Expectations

We expect every student to:

- Attend school every day unless they are genuinely unable to do so.
- Arrive at school on time and be ready to learn.
- Attend every lesson throughout the school day.
- Remain in lessons unless given permission to leave.
- Make every effort to attend school even when they are experiencing minor ailments or difficulties that do not prevent them from attending.
- Work with staff and their families to address any barriers to attendance.

Our school attendance target is **96% or above**.

Attendance is monitored closely throughout the year. Parents/carers should understand that even what may appear to be a small amount of absence can quickly accumulate and significantly reduce the amount of learning a student receives by **0% attendance means that a student is absent for**



approximately one day every two weeks. Over a school year, this can amount to around four weeks of missed education.

Our Attendance Bands

At EPHS, we use attendance information to identify students who may require support at the earliest opportunity.

98–100% – Excellent Attendance

Students are attending extremely well and should be recognised and celebrated.

95–97% – Below EPHS Expected

Attendance is below our school expectation of 96% or is beginning to require closer monitoring.

91–94% – Attendance Concern

Attendance is a concern, and we will work with the students and family to identify and address barriers.

Below 91% – Serious Attendance Concern

Attendance is significantly affecting access to education. More formal support and intervention plans are likely to be required.

Persistent Absence

A student whose attendance falls **below 90%** is classed as a **Persistent Absentee (PA)** in line with national attendance expectations.

Being identified as a PA does not simply mean that a student is punished. It means that we need to work together to understand the reasons for absence and put appropriate support in place.

Reporting an Absence

If your child is unable to attend school, parents/carers **must inform the school on the first day of absence** and provide the reason for the absence.

Parents/carers should continue to update the school **each day** that their child is absent unless the school has agreed to a specific period of absence.

If we have not received a reason for absence, the school will contact parents/carers by text, telephone or other appropriate communication.



It is essential that the school has up-to-date contact information for all parents/carers. Please notify the school immediately if your contact details change.

Where we are unable to establish a reason for absence, or where there are concerns about a student's attendance or welfare, further contact and/or a home visit may be undertaken.

How EPHS Will Support Attendance

Our approach is based on the principle that:

Every Child Deserves a Champion.

We recognise that poor attendance can be linked to a wide range of barriers. These may include health, anxiety, family circumstances, transport, friendship difficulties, safeguarding concerns, additional needs or difficulties engaging with school.

Where concerns are identified, we will work with students and families to understand the barriers and agree with appropriate support.

Support may include:

- Contact from the Form Tutor or Head of Year.
- Attendance meetings with parents/carers.
- Individual attendance targets.
- Attendance monitoring periods.
- Pastoral support.
- Support from the Attendance Team.
- Support from external agencies where appropriate.
- Home visits.
- Bespoke reintegration plans following periods of absence.
- Regular communication with parents/carers.
- Recognition and celebration of improved attendance.

Where appropriate, attendance concerns may progress to formal action in accordance with the school's attendance procedures and Local Authority for guidance.

Attendance Monitoring and Intervention

Attendance is reviewed regularly by the Attendance Team, Heads of Year, and pastoral leaders.

Where attendance falls below the EPHS expectation, parents/carers may receive communication from school explaining the concern and the action required.



Early Support

Where attendance begins to decline, we will contact home and work with the students and family to prevent the situation from escalating.

Attendance Monitoring

Where concerns continue, students may be placed on an attendance monitoring period. During this time, attendance will be reviewed regularly, and parents/carers will be kept informed.

Where appropriate, medical evidence may be requested for repeated or ongoing absence.

Formal Attendance Intervention

Where attendance does not improve despite support, the school may invite parents/carers to a formal attendance meeting and consider further intervention.

This may include involvement from the Local Authority or other appropriate agencies.

Every student is considered individually.

Where a student has a medical condition, SEND, safeguarding concern or other significant circumstances affecting attendance, the support and intervention provided will take account of their individual needs.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Parents/carers should make medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.

Where an appointment during the school day is unavoidable, parents/carers should provide appropriate evidence of the appointment.

Students leaving school during the school day must follow the school's signing-out procedures.

For planned appointments, evidence should be provided in advance wherever possible.

For emergency appointments, parents/carers should contact the school as soon as possible.

Students will not be permitted to leave the school site without the appropriate parental/carer permission and safeguarding procedures being followed.



Illness

We understand that students will occasionally become unwell.

However, parents/carers should consider carefully whether an illness genuinely prevents their child from attending school.

For minor illnesses, students may often be able to attend school with appropriate support.

Where a student becomes unwell during the school day, the school will assess the situation and contact parents/carers where necessary.

The school may request appropriate medical evidence where there are ongoing or repeated absences.

Term-Time Absence

Parents/carers should routinely arrange holidays or other non-essential activities during term time.

The Headteacher may only grant a leave of absence during term time where there are **exceptional circumstances**, in accordance with current national guidance.

Each request will be considered individually, considering the circumstances and relevant context.

Parents/carers should submit requests for leave of absence through the school's established procedure.

Unauthorised term-time holidays may result in a penalty notice being requested in accordance with current national and Local Authority arrangements.

Religious Observance

Absence for religious observance will be considered in accordance with national guidance.

The school may seek appropriate information from the relevant religious body where it is necessary to establish whether the day is recognised as a day exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Attendance Rewards and Recognition

At EPHS, we believe that **recognition and celebration are important parts of improving attendance**.

We celebrate:



- Excellent attendance.
- Improved attendance.
- Students who overcome barriers to improve their attendance.
- Form groups achieving strong attendance.
- Positive attendance behaviours.

Attendance achievements may be recognised through **ClassCharts**, assemblies, form competitions, certificates, rewards and other whole-school celebrations.

Our aim is not simply to celebrate students who already have excellent attendance, but also to recognise **effort, improvement, and positive change**.

Punctuality

Excellent punctuality is an important part of being ready to learn.

The school day begins at **8:40am**.

- The first bell sounds at **8:35am**.
- Students should arrive on site by 8:35am to give them sufficient time to reach their form group.
- All students must be in their form group and ready to start by **8:40am**.
- Students arriving after 8:40am will be recorded as late.

Being punctual means students:

- Do not miss important information during form time.
- Start the day positively.
- Do not miss valuable learning.
- Develop responsibility and independence.
- Show respect for staff and other students.
- Develop positive habits for future education, employment, and adult life.

Late to School

If your child is going to be late, parents/carers should contact the school as soon as possible and provide the reason.

Where there is a genuine and unavoidable reason for lateness, this should be communicated to the school.

Students arriving late must follow the school's signing-in procedure.



Repeated lateness will be monitored by the Attendance Team and Heads of Year.

Where punctuality becomes a concern, parents/carers may be contacted and invited to discuss the reasons for lateness and agree with appropriate support and intervention.

Late to Lessons

Punctuality applies throughout the whole school day.

Students are expected to arrive at **every lesson on time, fully equipped and ready to learn.**

Students who arrive late to lessons may be challenged by staff, and appropriate consequences may be applied in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

Repeated lateness to lessons will be monitored and may result in further intervention from the Form Tutor, Head of Year, Attendance Team or other pastoral leaders.

Late After Registers Close

The morning registration period is important because it establishes whether students are present and receive full entitlement to education.

When a student arrives after the morning register has closed, the appropriate attendance code will be recorded in accordance with national attendance regulations.

An arrival after the register has closed may therefore result in an **unauthorised absence mark for the morning session**, unless there is an appropriate reason for the absence.

Parents/carers should be aware that repeated late arrivals after the register has closed may contribute towards the school's attendance intervention process and may meet the threshold for further action under national attendance regulations.

Attendance and Punctuality: A Shared Responsibility

Improving attendance and punctuality is everyone's responsibility.

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every day.
- Arrive on time.
- Attend every lesson.



- Be ready to learn.
- Speak to a trusted adult if something is preventing them from attending.
- Take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly.
- Ensure their child arrives on time.
- Inform school promptly when their child is absent.
- Provide appropriate information/evidence where requested.
- Work positively with the school to address attendance concerns.
- Avoid unnecessary appointments and absences during school time.

School

EPHS will:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality closely.
- Identify concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Communicate regularly with families.
- Celebrate excellent and improve attendance.
- Identify and address barriers to attendance.
- Provide appropriate support.
- Work with external agencies where necessary.
- Take formal action where appropriate.

Our EPHS Attendance Culture

At Ellesmere Park High School, we want every student to understand that **attendance is not simply about a percentage on a register – it is about opportunity.**

Every day in school gives students another opportunity to:

Learn. Connect. Achieve. Grow.

We will continue to maintain **high expectations alongside high levels of support.**

Our approach is:



High Expectations + Strong Relationships + Early Support = Improved Attendance

We will always seek to understand the individual circumstances behind attendance concerns, whilst being clear that regular attendance is essential for students to achieve their very best.

At EPHS, we believe:

Excellent Attendance = More Learning = More Progress = Better Outcomes = Better Life Chances

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