



Attendance Policy

JULY 2021

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Approved by:	Local Academy Board
Date of next review:	July 2022



We strive for 100% attendance:

At Ellesmere Park High School we take school attendance very seriously. We encourage and support our students and their families to understand and appreciate how important a high standard of attendance is and how it can impact on exam results, which are the backbone for positive outcomes for a student's future.

Our current attendance target is 95%, we expect all students to work towards maintaining at least this attendance figure. It is important for students and parents to understand that 90% attendance equates to a total of 4 weeks of absence over the year, or half a day per week. This will have a large impact on a child's progress.

- **Student absence from school**

If your child is absent from school for any reason you **must let us know as soon as possible on the first day of absence by calling 0161 789 4565**. If we have not heard from you, we will send you a text to let you know your child is absent. You can text back to update us, giving us the reason why they are absent and to let us know when we can expect them back in school. This text is generally sent to you by 11am every day and it is imperative that we have correct contact details so please let the school know of any changes.

Unless a specific time period of absence is given to us we will assume that your child will be returning to school the following day, it is therefore imperative that you call/text us every day that your child is absent as we cannot assume that if a child is ill one day that it is the case for the following day.

- **How we will communicate with you**

We will text, email or ring you if your child is absent and you have not told us why. If we are concerned about your child's attendance or punctuality, we will contact you by phone. The Family Support Worker may make a home visit if your child has regularly absent.

If your child's attendance drops below the school's attendance target of 95% it is likely that you will receive a letter from your child's Head of Year to say that they will be monitoring your child's attendance for a set period (usually 20 school days) and that any absences due to illness or injury will need to be evidenced.

If your child has a pre-existing medical condition that may affect their attendance at school please contact your child's Head of Year to ensure that we can support you with this in any way possible.

- **Medical / Dental Appointments**

We ask that all medical and dental appointments are made for out of school hours. If this is not possible, an appointment card/ parent's note must be shown to the school office before any student may leave the school premises. Where possible an appointment card or letter should be shown to the office in advance.

If it is an emergency appointment please contact the school on the day of the appointment to advise us of the time of the appointment and the arrangements for your child leaving the school premises.

**Please be aware that if we have not seen any evidence or received a phone call from a parent/carer regarding an appointment we will not allow a student to leave the premises.*

- **Approval for term-time absence**

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision

- **Intervention strategies for improving attendance**

95% and above – No intervention, keep it up!

Stage 1 (Usually 95% or below) - Letter sent home with registration certificate, this usually means your child will be monitored and any absence, without medical evidence, will be recorded as unauthorised. These letters are sent throughout the year.

Stage 2 (Usually 90% or below) – Parents will be invited to an Attendance Panel Meeting due to there being no improvements in attendance and now being classed as a persistent absentee. The Attendance Panel Meeting will have a member of the pastoral team, usually the Family Support Worker and an Education Welfare Officer. This meeting will involve your child being under a 6 week review of their attendance. Students will be monitored in school by the Family Support Worker.

Stage 3 (Usually 85% or below) – If the previous intervention strategies have not improved your child's attendance, Fast Track to Prosecution may be instigated by the Education Welfare Officer. This will involve a monitoring period for at least 12 weeks. Prosecution could include a fine of up to £2,500, a custodial sentence not exceeding 3 months, Community Service (for all parents with Parental responsibility).

**Please be aware that every child's attendance is looked at on an individual basis by the pastoral team. For example, if your child suffers from a medical condition that may affect their attendance the intervention/support strategies put in place would differ from those above.*

- **Persistent Absentees (PA)**

Any student whose attendance is below 90% is classed as a PA. Having attendance this low is detrimental to a child development and progress. Interventions will be put in place to support a child and their family to increase their attendance so that they are not missing valuable learning time.

- **Rewards**

We celebrate and reward those students that have excellent attendance but also those students who show improvement. It is vital that students are celebrated for their achievements and improvements. Attendance rewards are presented via way of ClassCharts. Attendance points are awarded that can then go towards various items. We also have form group attendance competitions on a weekly, termly basis. Again, the winning forms groups receive ClassChart points.

- **The Role of our Family Support Worker**

As part of the school's on-going efforts to help students reach their potential and benefit the most from their time in school a Family Support Worker (Mrs Calderwood) has been appointed. Her role is to ensure students are achieving their potential through attending school regularly and gaining the support required. Hopefully by working alongside parents to support their child we will ensure the best possible outcomes for each child.

Punctuality: We expect all students to have excellent punctuality

First bell will ring at **8:40am** and **ALL** students are expected to be in their form group by **8:45am**. If a student arrives after 8:45am, they will be classed as late.

What are the benefits of being on time?

- It gets your day off to a good start and puts you in a positive frame of mind, so that you can make the most of your learning opportunities.
- Form time is very important. Lots of information about the school day is given out first thing in a morning and you may miss key information if you are late.
- It sets positive patterns for the future. You can't expect to keep a job if you're always coming in late;
- It leads to better achievement because you attend for the entirety of each lesson.
- It helps you develop a sense of responsibility for yourself and towards others and is a sign of good character;
- It is respectful to your teacher and to your peers and builds good habits for later in life when your employer pays you to be on time.

• What happens if your child is late?

If your child is going to be late for school, where possible contact the school office on 0161 789 4565 and advise us of the reason for your child's lateness. If there is a justifiable reason for their lateness the office will make a note of it and will ensure that your child is not given a 'late detention'. If your child has a medical appointment that will cause them to be late, please let us know in advance by either calling the office or sending your child in with a note/appointment card so that we can mark it on our registers. For emergency appointments a phone call in the morning is much appreciated.

If your child is late they **must** sign in Student Services. Student Services is supervised by a member from the Pastoral Team from 8:45am-9:15am every morning. If your child is later than 9:15am they will be required to enter through the main reception and sign in.

The Heads of Year and Attendance Officer closely monitor punctuality and parents/carers of any students who are late on a regular basis will be contacted and asked to come in for a meeting to discuss the effects of their child's poor punctuality and work with parents/carers to try and improve it by putting appropriate interventions in place.

After the registers close any students that arrive after this time (without a legitimate reason) will be given a 'U' code on the registers. This is classed as an unauthorised absence. Please be aware 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. This may result in parents/carers receiving a fine of up to £120 per parent/per child.

• Consequences for being late

If your child is late to school two or more occasions during one week they will receive a 1 hour detention after school on a Friday.

Attendance Codes. Each school day is split into two sessions, the morning (AM) and the afternoon (PM).

/ & \ = / is used in the morning and \ is used in the afternoon. Both these marks mean that your child was present and on time.

B= educated at another place e.g. off-site

D= educated at another site and dual registered e.g. a long term managed move

V= School trip or other educational visit

L = late to school before registers close

U=late to school after registers close

M = medical appointment. Please try and make these out of school hours whenever possible.

R = Religious Observance i.e. EID

I = ill these marks are used when you have told us that your child is ill and school are satisfied that your child is too ill to attend. ***Please do not assume your child has an authorised absence just because you telephoned to inform us. If your child's attendance is low and you have received an attendance letter, we may require further information.***

C = absence for exceptional circumstances e.g. funeral

J= Interview e.g. college interview

W= Work Experience

P= Approved sporting activity

S= Study Leave

N = is used for an absence with No reason given **(it is important you inform us of your child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence otherwise this code will change to O)**

O = is used when we have not received any reason for your child's absence. These O marks shows that we have been unable to get hold of you and that you have not told us why your child was off school. O is also recorded where school feel there is not a good enough reason for your child to be absent. This is an unauthorised absence reported in the child's attendance certificate.

G = Unauthorised leave in term time. The G mark is used if a parent takes their child out of school during term time. ***We take attendance very seriously because there is clear evidence that any absence from school can and does impact on children's attainment. The second most common reason for absence from school is for a family holiday Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time.***

This is also recorded as **UNAUTHORISED** and you will be liable for **Penalty Notice which will incur a fine of £120 per parent per child which will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. **5 or more days recorded unauthorised absence in an term can result in a Penalty Notice being applied for to the local authority for Non-attendance. A Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. The fine increases to £120 per parent per child if paid within the 21-28 days following the Penalty Notice being issued. unpaid fines proceed through the legal system.***