

# Attendance Policy

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**Ellesmere College**

## **Attendance Policy**

Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996).

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the school must keep an attendance register.

This Policy follows DofE Guidance – [Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities 2024](#) and [Summary table of responsibilities for School Attendance 2024](#).

The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **1. Aim**

The school is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The school will work with parents and pupils to secure this aim. The other purpose of this attendance policy is to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the school.

Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents.

### **2. Taking the Register**

Pupils of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register ALL pupils (including those over compulsory school age).

The register must be updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition, all teaching staff are asked to check that the pupils who should attend each lesson do so, and are registered on SIMS.

### **3. Instructions regarding the completion Of Registers**

#### **General points**

- A Register is a legal document and must be treated as such;
- Lower School Register times are 8.30am to 8.45am and 1.25pm to 1.40pm.
- Senior School Register times are 8.30am to 8.45am and 1.55pm to 2.10pm.
- Registration is not to be done before these times and pupils must be physically seen during this time span.
- The register must be kept in the school for a minimum of three years.
- School Attendance Registers must be available for inspection by registered inspectors.

#### **Specific instructions to Houses**

- The register is to be taken at the prescribed time each day.
- The register MUST be taken by a member of Common Room or a House Mother in person – it may NOT be delegated to a pupil however responsible.

- Each pupil marked as present must be SEEN IN PERSON AT THE TIME by the person taking the register.
- Any pupil NOT SEEN MUST be MARKED ABSENT at the time by inputting an N in the space provided.
- It is the House Mother's responsibility for Senior School and Lower School Secretaries for Lower school to contact parents of absent pupils. The follow up must take place immediately and the pupil accounted for. Failing which, consideration should be given to instituting the 'Missing Pupil' procedure.
- Ten days of continuous absence, for whatever reason, or a failure to attend regularly MUST be reported to the DHP.

#### **Specific Instructions to Tutors/House Staff**

- AM and PM registration marks should be updated/completed on SIMS by 9.15am and 2.15pm respectively. If staff are unable to update the SIMs registers, then they should let reception know immediately.
- Each pupil marked as present must be **SEEN IN PERSON AT THE TIME** by the person taking the register. Any pupil **NOT SEEN MUST be MARKED ABSENT** at the time by placing an N in the space provided.
- If a pupil is absent, a note should be tagged to the registration mark with a reason. These notes can be read by all staff, so should not be intrusive.
- It is the House Mother's responsibility for Senior School and Lower School Secretaries for Lower school to contact parents of absent pupils. The follow up must take place immediately and the pupil accounted for. Failing which, consideration should be given to instituting the 'Missing Pupil' procedure.
- **Ten days of continuous absence, for whatever reason, or a failure to attend regularly MUST be reported to the DHP.**

#### **4. Lesson Registers**

- Registers must be taken in the first 15 minutes of any session on SIMS. If staff are unable to update the SIMs registers, then they should let reception know immediately.
- Tutors should mark a pupil as '/' if present, 'N' if absent, and no gaps should be left. In the case of 'N', it is the teacher's responsibility to follow this up as far as possible. If a pupil arrives late, 'L' should be entered and the minutes late noted. If a pupil arrives after the registration period, then 'U' should be entered.
- Known absences for e.g., illness, sporting activity, or trips should be inputted.
- Accurate marking of registers is vital.
- Individual teachers are responsible for the supervision of their classes. Classes should not be left unsupervised. Should the need arise, staff may:
  - Summon help from a teacher in an adjacent classroom.
  - Use a phone to call Reception 622321 or Sickbay Ext 229, mobile 07531 801558
  - Send the individual with another accompanying to the Sickbay, if appropriate.
- Members of the Sixth Form with study periods are allowed to work in their House studies. They may also work in the Sixth Form Centre or the Library (there are always members of staff available in the immediate vicinity).

The following codes are to be used in the registers from now on please.

Code	Description	Meaning	Example
/	Present (AM)	Present	Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes.
\	Present (PM)	Present	
N	Absent from Roll Call (Reason for absence not yet established)	Reason for absence not yet provided (will need to be changed within 5 days)	
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.	Parents haven't informed school of absence.
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	Late Arrival before the register closes	
U	Arrived in school late after registration closed	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.	Poor timekeeping e.g., sleeping through the alarm
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school	Attending taster days at other schools Attending courses at college
C	Leave of absence granted by the school	Absence that we know about and has been approved	Travel issues
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA.	Paid part in a Film or TV programme.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Pupils who require a part time table to support their learning needs.	Pupils on a reduced timetable.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Suspension of pupil by the school	
F	On site but not in expected lesson	Present	Participation in an activity on site.
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school	Where the school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school
I	Illness (in Sickbay)	Authorised absence (In College Sickbay) or In-House Isolation	
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment	University/College Interview or Job interview
M	Medical, Dental or Illness	Authorised absence (Out of School)	
P	Participating in a sporting activity	All Sporting activities off site that have been approved by the school.	Away matches and other sporting events off the school site.
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for an examination	Study leave sanctioned by the school	
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the school of a strictly educational nature.	Trips organised by school and supervised by school.
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Where a sixth form pupil's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, may give leave of absence The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with or the pupil.	Year 13 might request not to attend on a day they have no lessons.

Code	Description	Meaning	Example
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available	School Transport cancelled due to snow.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency	Government warning not to travel.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.	Lower School is closed..
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly	Issue in Whole School meaning they aren't able to have lessons in the buildings and its safer for the children to be at home.
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in police detention,</li> <li>• remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>	
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law		Covid or other Contagious outbreak
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil on register in advance of arriving	
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance	Days between terms; half terms occasional days (for example, bank holidays)

## 5. Reporting

The register must record the following:

- Whether the pupil is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.
- An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:
  - one taking place off the school premises
  - approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Head
  - supervised by a person approved by the governing body or Head
  - of an educational nature, including work experience, field trips and educational visits, interviews with prospective employers, or for a place in Higher or Further Education.
- Link courses where pupils attend an FE college for part of their time, or franchised pupils receiving part of their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under school supervision (e.g., sick children being taught at home), or attending approved sporting activity.
- When a pupil of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence, giving the nature of the approved educational activity (for a pupil of compulsory school age).

## 6. Responsibilities

The Head will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;

- determine (in collaboration with the DHs and HsMs) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested or absences which have taken place for which no request was made.

The Deputy Head Pastoral will:

- be the Senior Attendance Champion;
- be responsible for maintaining good attendance;
- maintain effective systems for tackling absence;
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school;
- notify parents as appropriate that if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the LEA over persistent absentees, if appropriate;
- liaise with the LEA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school;
- oversee the attendance arrangements;
- work with HsMs to ensure the efficient running of the system;
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence;
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence;
- deal with issues of inadequate registering;
- arrange appropriate training for staff;
- keep the Head informed of the progress of the policy;
- advise the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved;
- meet regularly with the local authority appointed EWO;
- specifically inform the EWO (name and address) of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for 10 days or more without the absence being recorded as authorised. For UKVI sponsored pupils this will also be reported to the UKVI;
- make sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need;
- set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents.

The Head of Lower School and / or HsMs will:

- ensure that all pupil absences are noted and absence notes received from parents, Tutors must pass on any request for absence;
- ensure that all registers are completed and handed to the school office at the end of each term;
- make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering;
- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up;
- make regular checks on absence notes;
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with;
- contact parents over pupil absences where appropriate;
- liaise with the DHP on the efficiency of the system;
- liaise with the DHP over training needs.

Classroom Teachers will:

- check the attendance of pupils at their lessons;
- register the pupils in Sims;

- ascertain the reason for absence and follow-up as necessary;
- inform the HsM of the names of pupils who are absent without notification.

Pupils are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session);
- if possible, inform the school of their absence on the first day of non-attendance;
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school;
- discuss with the tutor any planned absences well in advance (e.g., A medical appointment);
- make any request for leave of absence in good time.

## **7. Inspection**

The DHs will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection.

## **8. UKVI Sponsored Pupils**

- Sponsored pupils should meet the school expectations on attendance
- Sponsored pupils are subject to review by the EWO
- Any sponsored pupils whose overall attendance drops below 80% during term time will be reported to UKVI. Sponsorship will be withdrawn unless there are exceptional and evidenced reasons for non-attendance.

## **9. Leave of Absence**

Leave can be granted only by the Head or in their absence by the DHs. Approval for a leave of absence will be based on recommendation from the HsM and/or DHs, or in line with established protocol.

## **10. Absence at the Start and End of Terms**

- Missing lessons can have a detrimental effect on a pupil's learning and may affect their final exam results. The school does not encourage late arrivals or early leave.
- The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides.
- The school recognises that travel arrangements can be difficult and will normally allow arrivals during the first day back. Departures on the last day of term will also be sanctioned.
- Any other absences will be deemed inappropriate and be recorded as such.
- On return to school from extended unauthorised leave, extra supervised work sessions may be put on at the weekend. These would not be optional.

## **11. Holiday Leave**

- Leave of absence should only be granted in exceptional circumstances, so it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. If exceptional circumstances are thought to exist, then formal requests must be made to the Head, via the HsM/HoLS.
- The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides.
- The Head will take into account:
  - The age of the child
  - The time of the year proposed

- The nature of the holiday
- Parental wishes
- The views of the HsM and/or DHs
- If the pupil still goes on a holiday which has not been approved by the school, it will be recorded as such.

#### **12. Short Term Leave**

The School can legally grant short term leave for family reasons. It is for the Head to determine the reasonableness and length of time the pupil can be away from school.

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence.

If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registering no absence needs to be recorded.

#### **13. Religious Observance**

A pupil has not failed to attend school if the absence was on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs. The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

#### **14. Monitoring and Review**

The Deputy Head Pastoral will review the working of the policy on an annual basis.

Authorised by	The Headteacher
Date	April 2025

Reviewed by	DHP
Date	April 2025

Effective date of policy	April 2025
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