

Attendance Policy

Document Control

This document is issued, controlled and impact assessed by the Senior Leadership Team.

The latest version of the procedure will be maintained on the School Website.

Introduction

In managing student attendance, we will operate in line with the Local Authority (LA) operational policy, the government legislation - '2006 Pupil Registration Regulations and the DfE document 'School attendance - policy and practice on categorisation of absence'.

Students need to attend the Endeavour Academy regularly if they are to be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities that we provide. Statistics support that good attendance links to increased attainment.

There are a number of different reasons why students may not attend school. Some are acceptable, such as genuine illness, attendance at an interview, religious observance or other legitimate off-site events, and all will be coded appropriately.

Some parents / carers may condone absences which we do not feel can be authorised (e.g. holidays, shopping trips or hair appointments). Some students may truant unknown to their parents / carers because of anxiety about certain lessons, fear of failure, bullying or because they are under extreme family pressure.

As staff we will all work together to encourage maximum attendance by:

- Having high expectations of all our students.
- Creating a caring and secure atmosphere in which students feel valued.
- Providing a stimulating and accessible curriculum.
- Providing an attractive and safe environment.
- Supporting students if they have problems or concerns.
- Working closely with parents / carers.
- Ensuring we adhere to the School's systems for ensuring good attendance and punctuality.

Legislation Regarding Attendance

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998

- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, (Amended 2012)

Expectations

At Endeavour Academy it is our expectation that all of our students will:

- Show improvement/increased attendance – school refusers – non attendees
- Attend school regularly
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day as stated in our home school agreement
- Be aware of their own attendance percentage and take responsibility for it. This will include target setting
- Report to office and sign in if they are late. This is also a Health and Safety requirement

Responsibilities

Parents / Carers' Responsibilities

- Parents / carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance, and that their child is fully equipped and in appropriate school dress.
- Parents / carers are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for their child's absence. If a child is ill, we ask that they give an indication of when the child might return to school. If contacted by us we expect parents / carers to provide a justifiable reason for absence, either by a text reply, telephone call, or e-mail. We request that the child is not allowed to remain at home for minor complaints or illnesses, if they are fit enough to be up and about; they are fit to be in school.
- If students have any problems / issues in the school they must **NOT** be kept off school, please contact your child's Learning Mentor who will take immediate action.
- Parents / carers must seek permission for any leave of absence. The Head of School retains the right to refuse request in line with Department for Education guidelines.

Students' Responsibilities

- Students must ensure they attend the Endeavour Academy regularly and every session on time.
- Students must **NOT** leave the school without permission, 'truant'.
- Students who have been absent must ensure parent / carers have advised school of the reason for absence. Letters will be sent to parents / carers who have not advised the school.
- Students are invited to attend a 'return to learn' meeting with their Learning Mentor on the first day following absence: any concerns will be discussed and suitable support offered.
- If students arrive at the school late, they must sign in. If they have attended an appointment,

without prior notice, they should provide evidence of this. If they need to leave the school for an appointment they must have a note or appointment card and sign out.

Learning Mentors' Responsibilities

Learning Mentors are available during school hours to discuss any attendance concerns, providing in school support to students and parents / carers.

Learning Mentors will ensure that on-line registration is promptly entered during registration period. Marks will be reviewed, then all parents / carers of students for whom we have no reason for absence will be contacted in the morning by text message or phone call.

If the parent / carer does not report a reason for absence, the school will send out a letter referring to all absence during the week. If there is still no response a final letter will be sent warning that failure to provide a valid reason for absence within 7 days will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised, which will be referred to the Attendance Officer. An investigation may lead to formal legal proceedings being taken to secure attendance.

The Learning Mentor will update the behaviour log to report any reasons for absence and attendance concerns (e.g. illness / medical appointments and class truancy) and any interventions put in place. A daily report will be generated and forwarded to the Leadership Team. This will ensure a consistent approach.

A weekly statistical return will be forwarded to Learning Mentors and the Leadership Team. Other printouts, e.g. for an individual student, will be provided as requested. Parents / Carers will be advised daily of late attendees via a phone call or text. Learning Mentors will receive half-termly percentage attendance reports of individual students in their tutor group and copies of the official register monthly.

The Deputy Head of School will regularly analyse student absence and look for patterns of absence and take swift action where there is an attendance concern. Students with issues in school will be followed up immediately. Students whose percentage attendance falls below 90% will be reviewed regularly by the Senior Team. If appropriate, a letter of concern will be sent to parents / carers and their progress monitored (stage 1). Failure to make an improvement will result in a school attendance target being set (stage 2). Stage 1 and 2 students will be regularly reviewed and a consistent process followed with consideration to individual circumstances. Failure to make an acceptable improvement or where there is an immediate concern, further interventions will be used. See school interventions for unacceptable attendance.

The Learning Mentor will liaise regularly with parents / carers, Deputy Head of School, Attendance Officer, School Counsellor, School Nurse and other external agencies about current student attendance concerns.

The Attendance Officer will represent the school at local authority attendance meetings and other multiagency meetings.

Teachers' Responsibilities

All Teachers must complete a register of attendance on SIMS for every class they teach within 10 minutes of the start of lesson, or in the case of system failure advise Reception of absentees. This is a legal requirement. Any discrepancies (i.e. present at registration but not in lesson) should be reported to the Learning Mentor as soon as possible to be followed up. If a student is absent long-term, all teaching staff must provide appropriate work as requested by any member of the Senior Team.

Students Out of School - e.g. on a trip

If students are out of the school, e.g. on a school trip, it is essential that a register is taken. It is essential that reception is advised of students who are going to be out of school or students in alternative curriculum to their timetable.

If a member of staff gives a student, or group of students, permission to leave the site during the school day, parental consent must be sought and the off-site register signed.

The Role of the Learning Mentors

The Learning Mentor is responsible for the daily review of their students' behaviour report, liaising with students, issuing appropriate sanctions as necessary. Any update on attendance will be e-mailed promptly to update student records and take further action as necessary. The Learning Mentor will sanction late students in line with the behaviour policy.

If a Learning Mentor has concerns about a student's absence, they must inform the Senior Team who will liaise with the Attendance Officer who will take over the case.

Leadership Team Responsibilities

Members of the Leadership Team will support the Learning Mentor and Teachers as necessary. The Deputy Head of School will have the responsibility of overseeing attendance issues and regularly liaise with appropriate colleagues.

The Coding of Attendance

Authorised Absences - School will decide if a reason for absence is authorised and will amend the register accordingly.

Unauthorised Absences

When a student is absent without prior authorisation and no justifiable reason for the absence is forthcoming, the absence is classed as unauthorised (truancy).

Explanations such as minding the house or looking after other children will not normally be acceptable reasons for absence. Some families will undoubtedly experience unusual and unavoidable situations (e.g. a sudden death of a relative) and we will be sympathetic in such circumstances. However, if a student is frequently late or absent because of their family situation, the reasons for this must be investigated and such absences may not be authorised.

N.B. If a member of staff has any doubt about the reason given for absence, feels that a parent may be condoning an unjustified absence or that a note or phone call is not authentic, they must consult the Head of School who will decide whether to authorise the absence.

Leave of Absence / Exceptional Circumstances

Continuity of learning is essential for a student to reach their full potential. Recent amendments to the law state that from September 2013 Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head of School is to determine the number of days a student can be away from the school if the leave is granted. At the expectation of The Department for Education the school will actively discourage **ALL** holidays in term time.

A summary of these recent changes can be seen at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

Penalties for unauthorised holidays and other unauthorised absences

Unauthorised holiday will lead to the school requesting Attendance Officer / Attendance Improvement Team intervention, and a fixed penalty notice will be issued to each parent / carer with parental responsibility. A fixed penalty notice will be issued for each child i.e. a double fine where there are 2 siblings taking unauthorised leave. The level of penalty will be in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) England (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and can be seen at the web link listed above.

School Interventions for unacceptable attendance

If a student's absence is persistent due to medical reasons the school may request documentation from the student's doctor or hospital if there is an ongoing condition: failure to provide this will mean the school will be unable to authorise further absence.

Failure to ensure a student attends regularly will result in the school making a referral to the Attendance Officer who will investigate absences and offer support where necessary. A failure to improve following support will lead to a referral to Durham County Council who will consider legal proceedings in Magistrates Court.

Students arriving late and penalties

Lateness

Students arriving late must sign in. The Learning Mentor will enter all late arrivals on the behaviour report as a negative. The time of arrival will be noted. A sanction may be issued depending on the reason for lateness.

If a student is late due to a medical appointment evidence must be provided to prevent a negative report and sanction.

Penalties

Students who arrive late without a satisfactory explanation will receive a negative entry on their behaviour report and an appropriate detention will be issued by the Learning Mentor Deputy, this will be monitored by the Deputy Head of School. If a valid reason is provided then no sanction will be issued. Students are encouraged to come in late rather than miss a whole day of education.

Assessment of Attendance and Rewards

Assessment

Attendance will be assessed and recorded on the student achievement and behaviour record using red, amber and green coding:

- **BLUE** - Students achieving 100% attendance
- **GREEN** - Students attendance above the government target - 95%
- **AMBER** - Student attendance 90% – 94.9%. Cause for concern. Student attendance being monitored
- **RED** - Students attendance below 90% - At risk of referral to the Attendance Officer.

Good attendance rewards

The Endeavour Academy celebrates good attendance; Students who attain 100% attendance in any school term will be issued with a bronze award certificate and reward. Students who attain 100% for 2 terms will receive a silver award certificate and reward. Students who attain 100% attendance for the whole school year will receive a gold award certificate and reward. Students who attain between 95% - 99% attendance will be issued with a certificate. All award certificates are issued termly and annually.

In addition to this the school operates an 'Earn as you Learn' system where a financial award is given for children who meet individual expectations for each taught session. Rewards, in the form of vouchers, will be given out at the end of each term.