



# Attendance Policy (Including CME)



**ENDEAVOUR ACADEMY**  
Sometimes all we need is a FRESH START

**The Vision**

Together, **we** aim to develop well rounded, confident and responsible individuals who will aspire to achieve their full potential. Boasting a culture whereby all students and their families are shown compassion and respect, **we** encourage and empower each of them to contribute positively to society, displaying understanding and kindness and to others

*We do this by providing a welcoming, happy, safe, and supportive learning environment in which everyone is equal, and all achievements are celebrated and by giving students the skills and confidence to achieve their goals now and in the future.*

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Date Approved:</b> | July 2023 |
| <b>Approved By:</b>   | Trustees  |
| <b>Review Date:</b>   | July 2025 |

|                        |   |                             |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>Impact Assessed</b> | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------|

#### Document Control

This document is issued, controlled and impact assessed by the Leadership Team.  
The latest version of the procedure will be maintained on the School Website.

# Attendance Policy

## Revision History

Reference to DFE document 'Working together to improve school attendance' May 2022

Additional Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Authority

Persistent and severe absence

Addition to Legal sanctions

## Aim

We recognise the link between attendance and achievement of our students. This policy is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying and promoting positive behaviour.

We believe that all students benefit from the education we provide, and therefore from regular attendance. The aim of the Academy's attendance policy is to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at the Academy is crucial to maximise pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the Academy is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to.

## We will ensure that:

- All students have an equal right, and access to, an education in accordance with the national curriculum, or agreed alternative.
- Students will not be deprived of their education opportunities by, either their own absence or lateness, or that of other students.
- Action is taken where necessary to secure an improvement in attendance.

## It is recognised that:

- The majority of students want to attend the Academy to learn, to socialise with peers, and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society.
- Students and their families may need to be supported at some stage in meeting attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Students who attend and / or make significant improvements need to be rewarded and recognised.
- It is the responsibility of Parent / Carers / carers to ensure their children's attendance at the Academy as required by law (ref: Section 7, 1996 Education Act).

# Attendance Policy

We encourage full attendance by:

- Consistent, clear communication with Parent / Carers and students about the importance of regular, prompt attendance.
- Setting targets for improved attendance and sharing these with students and Parent / Carers.
- The accurate completion of registers at the start of each morning and afternoon session, and at the beginning of each teaching class.
- Contacting Parent / Carers on the first day of absence if no reason has been received.

Where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging:

- The Academy Pastoral Team will investigate.
- Parent / Carer will be invited to a meeting to discuss concerns and plan a resolution.
- Where intervention is not successful, Parent / Carers and students may be referred to Durham County Council's attendance improvement team for further investigation.
- Where intervention attempts have failed consideration will be given to the issue of a FPN (fine) or prosecution at magistrates Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996

## Legal framework

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance Parent / Carer responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

**The Education Act 1996 states that:**

**The Parent / Carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —**

- a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- b) to any special educational needs, he may have,
- c) either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

**A person begins to be of compulsory school age —**

- a) when he attains the age of five, if he attains that age on a prescribed day, and
- b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following his attaining that age.

**A person ceases to be of compulsory school age** at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year —

- a) if he attains the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- b) if he attains that age on that day, or
- c) (Unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following his attaining that age.

Endeavour Academy is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this Attendance Policy accordingly.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Endeavour Academy Trustees**

As part of our Academy approach to maintaining high attendance, Endeavour Academy Trustees will:

- Annually review the Academy's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow staff, Parent / Carers, and students to implement the policy effectively.
- Ensure that the Academy is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site.

### **Academy Leadership Team**

As part of our Academy approach to maintaining high attendance, the Academy Leadership Team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to students and their Parent / Carers.
- Ensure that the Academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement.
- Monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full policy review.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the Academy's attendance policy and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues.
- Support the Academy Pastoral Team in ensuring that government legislation on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them.
- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to take the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to this job.
- Report to the Trustees each term on attendance records, data and provision.
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively.

## **The Academy Pastoral Team**

As part of our Academy approach to maintaining high attendance, the Academy Pastoral Team will:

- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Report concerns about attendance to the Head of School/ Deputy Head of School (Personal Development) and log on CPOMS.
- Work with The Local Authority Attendance Improvement Team to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with Parent / Carers to discuss attendance issues.
- Refer appropriate cases to the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Team who may issue fixed-penalty notices. Keep records on CPOMS.

## **Teachers and Support Staff**

As part of our Academy approach to maintaining high attendance, the teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to students and their Parent / Carers, which include forming honest, open relationships with families.
- Ensure that the Academy's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement.

# Attendance Policy

- Ensure that the Academy Pastoral Team is kept fully aware and up to date with any concerns relating to the student that may impact on their attendance.
- The Academy Pastoral Team will ensure the Academy complies with all relevant government legislation and that they will work professionally with Parent / Carers, carers, students and relevant agencies to secure improvements in attendance via appropriate support or sanctions.
- Ensure that they fully understand and are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken each lesson and session.

## Parent / Carers

As part of our Academy approach to maintaining high attendance, we expect that Parent / Carers will:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at the Academy.
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home.
- Follow the Academy procedure for reporting the absence of their child and include an expected date for return.
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- Work with the Academy Pastoral Team when required to secure an improvement in attendance.
- Keep the Academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance and work with staff in resolving any issues that may be having an impact on their child.
- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at the Academy about the importance of attendance.
- Do not take their children out of the Academy for holidays during term time. Parent / Carers do NOT have the right to remove their child from education without prior permission from the Head of School. If Parent / Carers would like to make a special request for a Leave of Absence due to exceptional circumstances, they may do so by following the Leave of Absence procedures (as detailed in section 4).

The Head of School has the right to refuse requests for any Leave of Absence in accordance with Local Authority Guidelines. Students and families will be monitored and supported on an individual basis, considering the student and family needs, environmental factors, agency involvement and any other concerns. Support and / or sanctions will be determined by these factors.

# Attendance Policy

## Categories of absence and procedures for reporting absences

### Attendance Register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
  - Attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - Absent
  - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
  - Unable to attend due to self-isolation/ quarantine in relation to COVID 19 monitoring criteria.
- 
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
    - The original entry
    - The amended entry
    - The reason for the amendment
    - The date on which the amendment was made.
    - The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

### See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school **by 8.40am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at **8.45am** and will be kept open until **9.15am**

The register for the second session will be taken at **12.40pm** and will be kept open until **1.10pm**.

We recognise that many students who are referred to Endeavour Academy have not been attending school prior to admission. Students may be placed on a **short-term** Attendance Plan which will be agreed and reviewed by the school in consultation with the LA Attendance Officer. For these students the register will be kept open for 30 minutes from expected time of arrival.

# Attendance Policy



## **Unplanned Absence and Illness**

Parent / Carers must notify the Academy on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). This should be done by a phone call to the main school reception.

For students with attendance above 95%, absence due to illness will be authorised unless the Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt or the student's attendance is below 95%, the Academy may ask Parent / Carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the Academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and Parent / Carers will be notified of this in advance.

Parent / Carers are expected to notify schools if the family/ child is in quarantine due to COVID and provide information to support if required.

## **Medical or Dental Appointments**

Parent / Carers should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside of school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend the Academy for as much of that day as possible.

## **Authorised Absences**

There may be some instances where the Academy will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement. All authorised absences other than medical appointments or illness require a Leave of Absence form to be completed. These can be collected from reception.

## **Exclusion**

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. These will be dealt with in line with the appropriate policy.

## **Family Holidays and Extended Leave**

We do not permit absence for holiday periods. However, it is within the Head of School's power to grant an authorised leave of absence for exceptional circumstances examples of exceptional



# Attendance Policy



circumstances could include overseas family issues / emergencies, health related issues and associated recovery, exceptional opportunities that would enhance the life experiences of the student. (The circumstances will be considered individually before a decision is made).

NO authorisation is possible without a completed leave of absence form. (Available from reception). We ask Parent / Carers to give at least a month's warning.

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing and will outline the details of any possible sanctions. All information regarding leave of absence will be passed to the Academy Pastoral Team who will follow Local Authority procedures for unauthorised absence. Parent / Carers should contact the Academy immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

## **Religious Observance**

The Academy recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times. These absences will be verified by the Academy Pastoral Team in conjunction with Durham County Council as they hold the official record for dates of religious observance.

Parent / Carers will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

## **Occupational Purposes**

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Show people (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 Academy, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

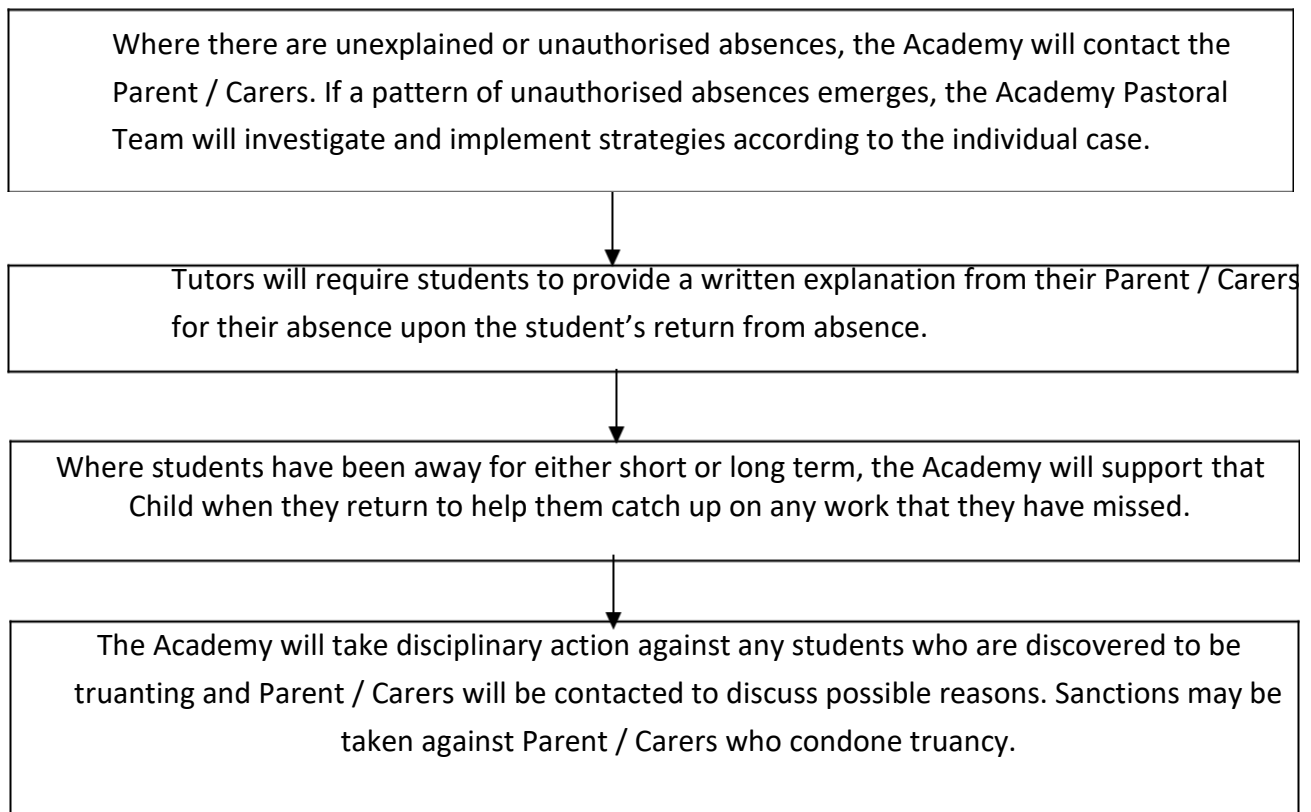
## **Late Arrivals**

Registration begins at 8.45am Students who arrive after this time but within the registration period will be marked as late. The registration period ends at 9.00am

Students who arrive after 9.00am should report straight to reception to sign in and give a reason for their lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for lateness will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that students sign in at reception to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all students are accounted for.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Academy's Promoting Positive Behaviour and Reward Policy. The Academy Pastoral Team will also investigate any concerns and may need to follow legal proceedings to secure regular and punctual attendance.

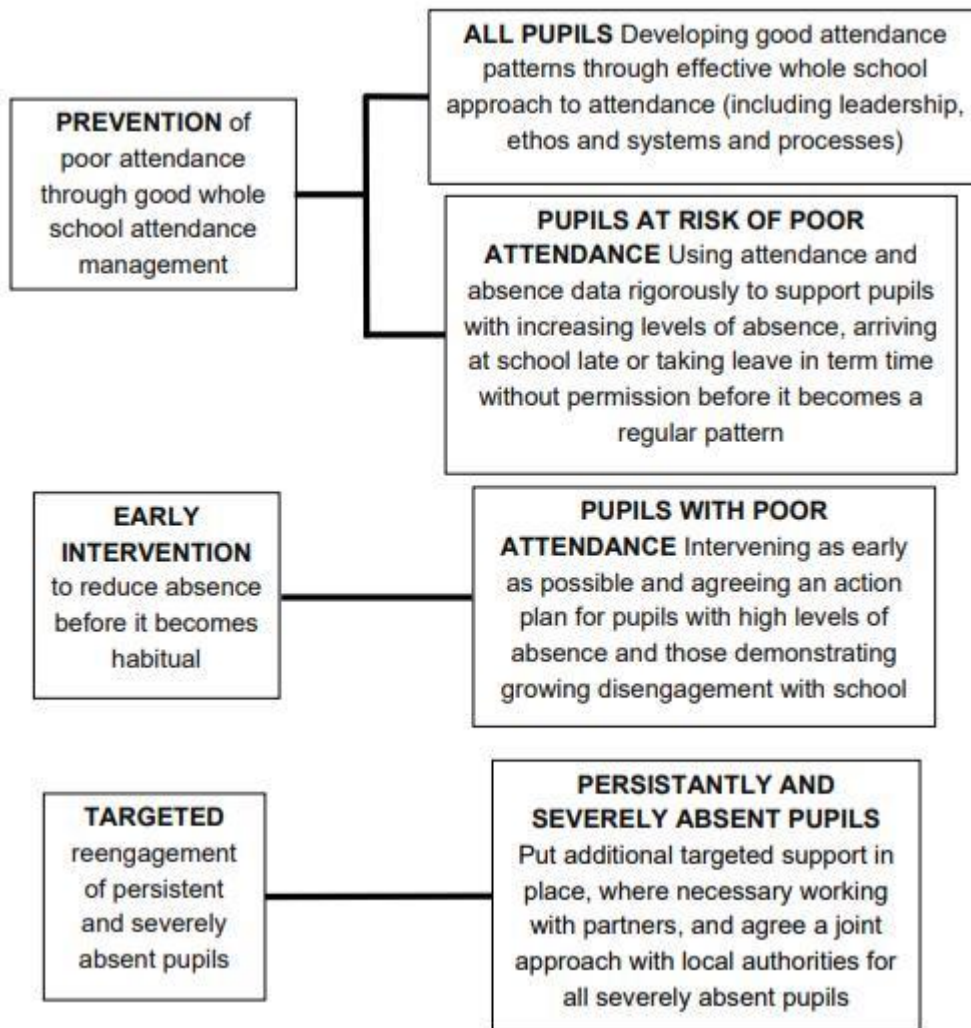
## Follow up absence flow chart



## Attendance monitoring for students at risk/ vulnerable

All students are monitored closely including all students who are currently recorded as vulnerable or at risk. Full evidence is gathered and all causes for concern are recorded / reported / acted upon immediately with appropriate staff and external agencies. Safeguarding procedures and agency referral procedures are followed. Vulnerability and risks include safeguarding, young carers, risk of criminality, youth offending service, substance misuse, CSE, mental health, Parent / Carer mental health and Parent / Carer learning disabilities and those missing from education. This list is not exhaustive.

## Persistent (less than 90%) and severe absence (less than 50%)



## Children Missing from Education (CME)

The LA procedures to safeguard missing children states that the Academy Pastoral Team (where a school does not buy the service of an EWO) should be responsible for the check and contacting the CME officer at Durham County Council. Procedures should be followed and removal of a child from roll ONLY in strict accordance with regulation 8(h)(iii) of the (Pupil Registration Education) Regulations 2006. **THIS ONLY** applies to children who have moved from the area to an UNKNOWN location, and the school at which the child is currently registered has not been informed of a new address or new school. It must NOT be used if an address or location IS known. Evidence must be

gathered to prove reasonable enquiries have been made to establish the whereabouts of the child and family.

## **Legal Sanctions**

- The Academy and LA will make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution. It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are:
  - o Parent / Carer contracts
  - o Education supervision orders
  - o Attendance prosecution
  - o Parent / Carer orders
  - o Fixed penalty notices 91.

Local authorities can fine Parent / Carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, Parent / Carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

A referral to the Local Authority will be made dependent on criteria being met. This may take into account:

- Several unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the Parent / Carer or withdraw the notice.

## **Strategies for promoting attendance.**

- Regular communication with Parent / Carers
- Recognition of attendance by week and to date in assembly to ensure continuous whole school focus.
- Intervention support for students with persistent absence to complete missed work and minimize impact on learning.
- Back to school interviews to identify if further support is required for reintegration.

# Attendance Policy

- Rewards and recognition systems to recognise 100% attendance.
- Other intervention strategies are used throughout the year.

## **Attendance Monitoring**

The Academy Pastoral Team monitors pupil absence daily.

Parent / Carers are expected to call the Academy in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4).

If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days, we will contact the Parent / Carers to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting Parent / Carers a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving the Local Authority Attendance Team.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee and the Local Authority Attendance Team will be made aware. We compare our attendance data to that of Alternative Provision Schools in the region and share this with Trustees.

## **Links with other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust and Academy policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Exclusion Policy

# Attendance Policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

| Code | Definition                    | Scenario  |
|------|-------------------------------|---|
| /    | Present (am)                  | Pupil is present at morning registration  |
| \    | Present (pm)                  | Pupil is present at afternoon registration                                      |
| L    | Late arrival                  | Pupil arrives late before register has closed                                   |
| B    | Off-site educational activity | Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school   |
| D    | Dual registered               | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered  |
| J    | Interview                     | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment    |
| P    | Sporting activity             | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| V    | Educational trip or visit     | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school     |
| W    | Work experience               | Pupil is on a work experience placement   |

# Attendance Policy

| Code                        | Definition                        | Scenario   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Authorised absence</b>   |                                   |  |
| C                           | Authorised leave of absence       | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E                           | Excluded                          | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made         |
| H                           | Authorised holiday                | Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances   |
| I                           | Illness                           | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness        |
| M                           | Medical/dental appointment        | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment                                |
| R                           | Religious observance              | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance                      |
| T                           | Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence | Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school  |
| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> |                                   |  |
| G                           | Unauthorised holiday              |  |
| N                           | Reason not provided.              |  |

# Attendance Policy

Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school.

Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges or replaced with code O if no reason given)

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Definition</b>                                 | <b>Scenario</b>  |
|-------------|---|--|
| O           | Unauthorised absence                              | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence  |
| U           | Arrival after registration                        | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed  |
| Y           | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel because of a local / national emergency, or pupil is in custody |
| Z           | Pupil not on admission register                   | Register set up, but pupil has not yet joined the school   |
| #           | Planned school closure                            | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term / bank holiday / INSET day  |



# Attendance Policy

## Appendix 2: Attendance monitoring stages

Endeavour Academy recognise progress from point of admission; students have the opportunity to achieve rewards based on overall % attendance as well as meeting personalised targets.

| Colour  | Attendance % | Actions / Interventions  |
|---|--------------|--|
| Well done keep up the good work – attendance will have a positive impact on achievement.  | 97-100%      | Rewards and recognition  |
| Targets may be set to help you improve  | 90-96%       | Rewards and recognition<br>Pastoral Team monitoring (Target setting)<br>Parent / Carer meetings<br>Awareness raising with LA   |
| The Pastoral Team will work with you to improve your attendance and support you to achieve attendance targets.  | 75-89%       | Reward system for improved attendance<br>Internal escalation for declining attendance (DHoS)<br>Weekly monitoring at SLT of Individual Attendance Plan for expected improvement.<br>Contact with Parent / Carers<br>Possible referral to external agencies for support<br>Possible fine or legal sanctions for Parent / Carers |
| Cause for concern, your targets have not been achieved and academic outcomes will be affected by low attendance. At this point the LA may consider court action for parents / carers. | Below 75%    | Reward system for improved attendance<br>Meetings with Parent / Carers, relevant external agencies and LA Attendance Team<br>Possible court action for Parent / Carers   |

## **Appendix 3: Leave of Absence during Term Time Applications**

Academic Year 2023/24

Dear Parent / Carer,

### **Leave of Absence Application Form:**

Please find overleaf an application form for leave of absence during term time. You should complete parts A and B, leaving part C blank for Academy use only.

### **New Regulations around Leave of Absence:**

When making an application for leave of absence during term time, please be aware that from 1st September 2013, Head Teachers are not able to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is because of a change in the regulations, which is fully explained in the 'Frequently Asked Questions' page attached to the back of the application form overleaf.

The application form attached therefore asks you to outline the reasons why you feel your application for leave of absence during term time should be regarded as 'exceptional.'

### **Leave of Absence Authorisation:**

Following the submission of your application, you will be notified as soon as possible of the Academy's decision. Please note that leave of absence authorisation is entirely at the Head of School's discretion, and if authorisation is granted, the number of days to be authorised will also be determined by the Head of School.

Parent / Carers should be aware that if your requested leave of absence is not authorised, but you still take the child out of the Academy, or you keep your child away from the Academy for a longer time than agreed / authorised, the absence (or excess absence where longer than agreed) will be recorded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absences on your child's attendance record may mean that you are liable to incur a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) or could face prosecution. Fines will be issued to each person with Parent / Carer responsibility for the child / children who is deemed liable for the offence / offences. 'The Frequently Asked Questions' page attached to the back of the application form overleaf explains the circumstances where enforcement action may be taken more fully.

If you have any queries please contact Mrs. L Wood, Endeavour Academy Deputy Head of School (Personal Development) / Pastoral Team Lead on 0191 5185595

Yours sincerely,

**Mrs K Whelan**  
**Head of School**

# Attendance Policy

## Appendix 4: Application for LOA

### Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time

| A. Pupil Details |  |      |  |
|------------------|--|------|--|
| Name:            |  | DoB: |  |
| Address:         |  |      |  |
| Reg group:       |  |      |  |

| B. Leave of Absence Request Details   |  |              |  |
|---|--|--------------|--|
| Start date of requested leave:  |  | End date:    |  |
| Return to school date:  |  | No. of days: |  |
| What are the <u>exceptional circumstances</u> for your leave of absence request that you wish the school to consider? |  |              |  |
|   |  |              |  |
| Name of parent / carer (print):   |  |              |  |
| Signature:  |  | Date:        |  |
| Name of parent / carer (print):   |  |              |  |
| Signature:  |  | Date:        |  |

| C. For School Use  |            |           |  |
|--|------------|-----------|--|
| Current attendance %:  |            |           |  |
| Previous LOA this academic year:   |            |           |  |
| Does the LOA request time coincide with assessments / other examination periods:   |            |           |  |
| Any mitigating / aggravating circumstances (Including any ongoing medical issues): |            |           |  |
| Child's current / potential level of attainment?                                   |            |           |  |
| Is the LOA approved?   | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> |  |
| If <b>YES</b> - Number of days to be authorised for this LOA application:          |            |           |  |
| Signature of Head of School:   |            | Date:     |  |
| *Register Code to be used for this LOA:  |            |           |  |

## **Holidays in Term Time: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why did the rules on Holidays in Term Time change? / Why has my child's school told me that they will not authorise term time holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances?**

In July 2012, Charlie Taylor (the Government's expert advisor on behaviour at that time) was asked by Michael Gove (Secretary of State for Education) to conduct a review of school attendance.

Mr. Taylor stated in his report that if children are taken away for a two-week holiday every year and have an average number of days off for sickness and appointments, then by the time they leave at sixteen they will have missed a year of school.

Mr. Taylor's report recommended that changes were made to strengthen the rules on term time holidays, and that whilst head teachers should continue to have some discretion over the issue, holidays in term time should be the exception rather than the rule.

In his response to the report, Michael Gove endorses this recommendation, stating that more needs to be done to discourage term time holidays and that the rate of these absences in primary schools is double that of secondary schools. He comments that the expectation will be that schools only give permission for absence where there are exceptional circumstances that warrant it.

Head Teacher's Associations welcomed the recommendation to strengthen rules on term time holidays, recognising the disruption that holidays can cause to a pupil's education. Following consultations, the law around term time holidays was then changed from 1st September 2013.

### **What does the law say about Holidays in Term Time?**

It says that from 1st September 2013, Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

### **If my child's school refuses to authorise my term time holiday request, will I receive a fine (Fixed Penalty Notice) and can I be prosecuted?**

Durham County Council's Fixed Penalty Notice Protocol acknowledges that regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice might be issued include unauthorised holidays in term time, but only where the holiday absence amounts to seven days or more in any period up to a maximum twelve rolling school weeks. You can be prosecuted if you receive a fine and it is not paid.

# Attendance Policy



Under the Education Act 1996, Parent / Carers commit an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular school attendance. Taking a child out of school for a holiday without permission, and where the absence amounts to ten days or more of unauthorised absence is viewed as failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Payment of a Penalty Notice, where offered, is an alternative to prosecution. If unpaid, prosecution for the Education Act offence may therefore ensue. A fine will be issued to each person with Parent / Carer responsibility for the child / children who is deemed liable for the offence / offences.