



## Policy for Attendance

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Name and Title of Author: Chris Huscroft (CEO)

Name of Responsible Committee: School Improvement Committee

Trade Union Representative Approval: NA

Implementation Date: March 2020

Review Date: [bi-annually] Summer Term 2026

Version: 3

Approval Date: 09/04/2024 (in-conference)

Target Audience: School Leaders and Parents

Associated Local School Protocol: Yes – v3

## Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Revision	Revision Author
1	Dec '19	Trust policy created and recommended for approval	CJH & AO
2	May '22	Rewritten to reflect current legislation	CJH
2.1	Aug '23	Update to include mental health and ACE. Updates in <b>BLUE</b>	CJH
2.2	March '24	Added in <b>BLUE</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Responsibilities pg. 5</li> <li>• Paragraphs: 7, 14, 19</li> </ul>	CJH
3	Sept '24	Updated with latest changes from DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance'. Changes in <b>BLUE</b> .	CJH

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## Policy Statement

At Edukos Trust we strive to be: **EXCEPTIONAL. TOGETHER.** Creating great schools, ensuring better lives for all who we serve through our 3 core values:

- **Friendly**
- **Growth**
- **Trust**

## Related Documents

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

## References

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

## Purpose

Our policy recognises that high levels of school attendance are significant to raising standards in education and ensuring all children can fulfil their potential. It is an assumption so widely understood but insufficiently stated that children and young people need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and achieving less in both primary and secondary school.

The overall aim of the attendance policy is to:

- Keep children safe and ensure their welfare needs are met in accordance with safeguarding practice.
- Provide a stable environment in which our children can learn.
- Support parents/carers to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children who are of compulsory school age and registered at the academy, attend school regularly.
- Maximise educational opportunities for all our children, ensuring there is a consistent and fair approach with equal opportunities for all.
- Encourage good habits of school attendance with a vision on early intervention by supporting families with children in the Early Years Foundation stage.

## Scope

This policy applies to all schools in Edukos Trust.

## Responsibilities

The **Trust Board and the CEO** are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, ensuring that a consistent approach to Policy for Attendance is applied across the Trust. They are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole Trust.

**Local Governing Boards** are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for individual schools on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head Teacher (or nominated senior leader) to account for the implementation of this policy within their individual school.

The **Head Teachers** are responsible for ensuring that this policy and associated procedures are implemented consistently in the school. In addition to this the **Head Teacher and Teachers** will:

- Communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- Follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Refer matter to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service, where appropriate.
- To promote good attendance.

**Staff** are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring children do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual children to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

**Parents** are responsible for ensuring that they will

- Have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day.
- Inform the school on every day of absence.
- Work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.
- Avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.
- Talk to their child if they are worried about their child's attendance at school, it may be something simple that needs their help in resolving.
- Talk to their child's class teacher in the first instance about any barriers to learning.

## Equality and Diversity

Edukos Trust is committed to:

- Promoting equality and diversity in its policies, procedures and guidelines;

- Ensuring staff are protected from unlawful direct or indirect discrimination resulting from a protected characteristic (e.g. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).
- Delivering high quality teaching and services that meet the diverse needs of its children and its workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged

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## Attendance Expectations

1. We have high expectations for attendance and punctuality and ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and children. Children will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

See LSP for further details.

### Lateness

2. **Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.**
3. Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of other children. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents/carers of children who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents/carers will be invited to attend the school to discuss the problem with the schools designated Attendance Officer.
4. Due to site security, any child arriving after the register has closed will have to enter via main school office, where their attendance will be recorded accordingly by Office staff. If necessary, children will then be escorted to their class.

~~5. Good attendance at school is essential for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is certainly possible, but in the event of a child being away from school it is essential that the parent informs the school of the reasons for absence.~~

~~6. The Department for Education (August 2020) state that:~~

~~"Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school."~~

## Absence

### Absence reporting procedures

7. Please see the LSP for further, school specific details.

### Authorising parental absence request

8. Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the head teacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the head teacher who may seek advice from the EWO, taking the best interests of the child and the impact on their education into account.
9. The head teacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, they will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

### Leave of absence

10. We will only grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. To have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school expects parents to contact the head teacher in writing (using the Trust's Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Form) a minimum of **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.



11. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the child's previous attendance record will be considered. Where the absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. The school will not grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.
12. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
  - Immediately<sup>1</sup> before and during statutory assessment periods
  - When a child's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
  - Where a child's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason
13. If term-time leave is not granted, taking a child out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

#### Illness and healthcare appointments

14. Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.
15. There may be circumstances, where we may ask parents/carers to provide a copy of the appointment letter.

#### Performances and activities, including paid work

16. The school will ensure that all children engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).
17. Additional arrangements will be made by the school for children engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the child.
18. The child will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the child would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a child receives an education:
  - For not less than six hours a week; and
  - During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
  - On days where the child would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
  - For not more than five hours on any such day.
19. Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The head teacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a child's attendance would fall below

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<sup>1</sup> In our trust, immediately means the two weeks preceding any testing period.

**96 percent.** Where a licence has not been obtained, the head teacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

#### Religious observance

20. Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** advance.
21. The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the child's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.
22. The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

#### Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

23. Where a child's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for children from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

#### SEND- and health-related absences

24. We recognise that children with **SEND** and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support those who find attending school difficult.
25. In line with the **SEND Policy** and **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled children to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any **EHCPs** that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.
26. Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the **DSL**. All children will be supported with their mental health.
27. If a child is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:
  - Inform the **LA** if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
  - Provide the **LA** with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
  - Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
  - Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
  - Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.
28. The school will incorporate an action plan to help any child with **SEND** and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until they are attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.
29. To support the attendance of children with **SEND** and/or health issues, we will consider:
  - Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
  - Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
  - Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
  - Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the **Common Assessment Framework**.
  - Using an internal or external specialist.

- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

### Part time timetables

30. All compulsory aged children are entitled to a full-time education. Only in exceptional circumstance would a part-time timetable be granted, but this arrangement will be short term, and should not exceed longer than 6 weeks.
31. If a part time timetable is authorised, the school must notify both the CEO and the Local Authority Education Officer for Safeguarding. A period when the child is not in school, must be recorded in accordance with the codes listed in [appendix 2](#).

### Leave during lunchtime

Please see the LSP for school specific information.

### Truancy

32. Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
33. All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of children and understand the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
34. All children are expected to be on site as detailed in the school's in the LSP.
35. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the head teacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.
36. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
  - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
  - If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
  - A penalty notice will be issued in line with the [Penalty notices and legal intervention section of this policy](#) where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.
37. The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).

### Absconding

See [appendix 3](#).

## Attendance intervention

38. In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the designated attendance leader will:
- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
  - Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
  - Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
  - Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
    - Sending letters to parents.
    - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
    - Using fixed penalty notices.
39. The school will use attendance data, in line with the '[Monitoring and analysing absence](#)' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the children whom the intervention is designed to target.

## Attendance register

40. We use an electronic management information system (MIS) to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities. Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether a child are:
- Present.
  - Absent.
  - Attending an approved educational visit.
  - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
41. In the event of the digital registration software failure, manual attendance registers will be used for to complete registration. Completed registers will be returned to the school office, and uploaded to the system once the problem has been resolved.

## Working with parents to improve attendance

42. We will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. Schools will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.
43. We will ensure that there are at least **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.
44. Schools will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the head teacher in advance. Schools will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that

parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

45. If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the designated attendance leader will work collaboratively with the child and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. Schools will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.
46. Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the head teacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the child's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

### Absences during term time

- ~~47. The Education (pupil registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states: Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.~~
- ~~48. It is the policy of this Trust not to authorise any absence other than illness or those with exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised absences may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.~~
- ~~49. AS OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2013, THE RATE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL BE £60 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £120 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 28 DAYS.~~
- ~~50. FROM AUGUST 2024 THE RATE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL BE £80 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £180 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 28 DAYS.~~
- ~~51. If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or fine to the maximum of £1000 plus costs.~~
- ~~52. There are approximately 188 school days (376 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 72 days (144 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.~~

### Holidays in term time

- ~~53. Any holidays during term time are to be discouraged.~~
- ~~54. Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the head teacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the head teacher, taking the best interests of the child and the impact on the child's education into account. The head teacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.~~
- ~~55. The Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence, including those for holidays, to children during term time unless they consider there to be an 'exceptional circumstance'.~~
- ~~56. 'Exceptional circumstance' means that the parent must make the case as to why their child should be treated differently to the norm. All requests will be treated on an individual case by case basis.~~

- ~~57. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the head teacher in writing, using the specific request form, at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.~~
- ~~58. Parents/carers are reminded that leave of absence taken from school without permission may result in the issuing of a fixed penalty notice, issued by the Local Authority.~~
- ~~59. It must be noted that there is no obligation on the part of the school or teachers to provide schoolwork to be completed by children whilst away on holiday.~~
- ~~60. The circumstances of each case should be taken into account, 'blanket approval' policies are not acceptable.~~
- ~~61. When considering a request for leave of absence we will take into account:~~
- ~~• The amount of time requested.~~
  - ~~• The child's general absence/attendance records.~~
  - ~~• Previous requests made for holiday absence and whether these are occurring annually/frequently.~~
  - ~~• Proximity of public exams, e.g. SATs.~~
  - ~~• Child's educational needs and their ability to catch up.~~
  - ~~• General welfare of the child~~
  - ~~• Circumstances of the request~~
  - ~~• When the request was made~~
- ~~62. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:~~
- ~~• Immediately<sup>2</sup> before and during statutory assessment periods~~
  - ~~• When a child's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence~~
  - ~~• Where a child's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason~~
- ~~63. All requests will be responded to with a written response confirming the length of time requested and how the request will be coded, e.g. whether it is authorised or unauthorised.~~
- ~~64. Where attendance has or is likely to fall below 90%, if the holiday is taken, all requests for holiday absence will unauthorised, except in exceptional circumstances for example, where the previous absence has been due to prolonged medical/hospital needs. The Head Teacher will use their discretion in this matter.~~
- ~~65. If, following a period of 10 days authorised absence, the child fails to return to school for a further 10 days, the school will seek advice from the Education Welfare Service leading to the possibly of removing the child from the school register.~~

## Persistent Absentee (PA)

66. A child is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's education, if not addressed and improvements made.

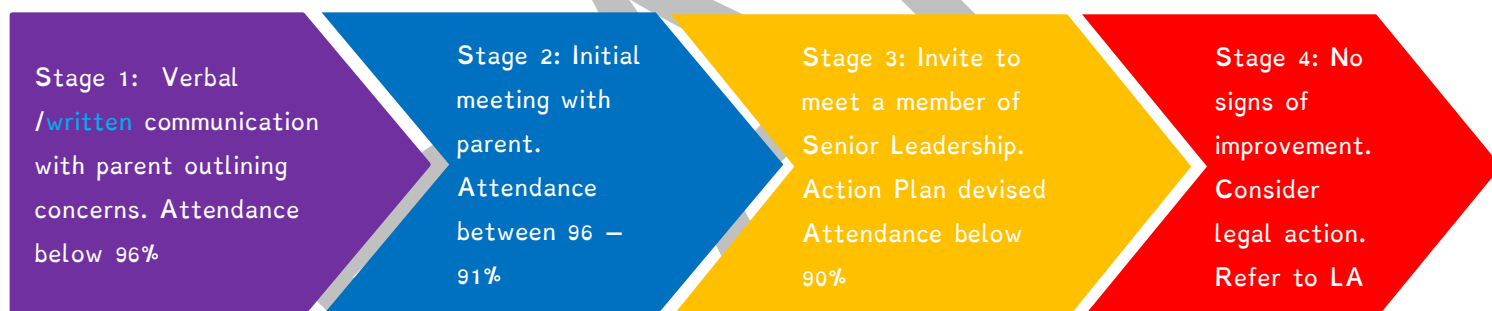
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<sup>2</sup> In our trust, immediately means the two weeks preceding any testing period.

67. Whilst it is acknowledged that children can be absent because of illness, there are also times when they can be reluctant to attend. If this is the case, the school will start having conversation with the parents/carers and child, if appropriate, at the earliest stage to gain a clearer understanding of any barriers. We recognise particular groups of children who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

68. Our schools monitor all absence, plus the reasons given for not attending school and will take the necessary steps to support the child, should their attendance show signs of deterioration. If a child's attendance falls below 90%, the school will invite the parents/carers to a meeting with the Attendance Officer, and member of senior leadership. During this initial meeting, an Attendance Action Plan will be devised, in conjunction with parents/carers, and the child, if appropriate, which will outline all parties contribution to improving the child's attendance. If after a period of 4 weeks, there are no signs of improvement, the school will either offer further strategies or consider referring the case to the Local Authority for possible legal action.



69. SEND and health-related absences (including mental health and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE))

70. Our schools recognises that children with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support children who find attending school difficult.

71. In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, our schools will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled children to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHCPs that have been implemented. The schools will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

72. Where the school has concerns that a child's non-attendance may be related to ACE or mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Policy for Safeguarding Child Protection will be followed.

73. All children will be supported with their mental health.

74. If a child is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a child is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the child's needs, capabilities and programme of work.

- Help the child reintegrate at school when they return.
  - Make sure the child is kept informed about school events and clubs.
  - Encourage the child to stay in contact with other children during their absence.
75. The school will incorporate an action plan to help any children with **SEND** and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the child is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.
76. To support the attendance of children with **SEND** and/or health issues, the school will consider:
- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
  - Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
  - Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
  - Identifying child's unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
  - Using an internal or external specialist.
  - Enabling a child to have a reduced timetable.
  - Ensuring a child can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
  - Implementing a system whereby children can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
  - Temporary late starts or early finishes.
  - Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
  - Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
  - Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## Penalty notices and legal intervention

See Appendix 1 – [Information for Parents](#)

## Monitoring and analysing absence

77. All absences are monitored. High levels of unauthorised absences, regular days off or long period of absence will be investigated by the school's designated attendance leader. Internal monitoring may also identify one or more specific groups of children at the school who have levels of absence higher than the national average for that group, which will result in the school taking appropriate action. The internal monitoring system will focus on, amongst others, the following groups:

- [The school cohort as a whole](#)
- Looked after children
- Free school meals eligibility
- Gender
- Years groups
- First language
- **SEND**
- [Children at risk of PA](#)

78. Staff from different schools within the trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

## Authorised Person

79. The Authorised Adult should be a responsible person and could include:
- a. Parent/Carer
  - b. Family member



- c. Child minder
  - d. Neighbour
  - e. An older sibling who has the parent/carers written permission to collect the child from school.
80. NB: If there is a change to the regular authorised adult, for any reason, please notify the staff by informing them as soon as possible either at the door in the morning or via a phone call to the school office.

## Alternative Provision

81. Schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of children educated off-site. Where this is the case, they will have reciprocal arrangements in place with the alternative provider to ascertain attendance information. This should be provided daily. All unexplained and unexpected absences will be followed up by the home school in a swift and timely manner.
82. The school will use the appropriate code (B) to indicate that the child is accessing alternative provision, thus demonstrating the school has confirmed that the education is supervised and appropriate measures are in place to safeguard children.

## Religious observance

- ~~83. Our trust recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends, schools will allow authorised absence for these times. Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.~~

## Promoting good attendance

- ~~84. We celebrate good attendance throughout the year in various ways, this encourages commitment to learning. Further details are available in your school.~~

## Local Authority Education Welfare Service

85. The Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.
86. Schools will ensure that they fully comply with all support from the Education Welfare Service.
- ~~87. Section 444 of the Education Act states that 'if a child of compulsory age, who is a registered child at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence.'~~
- ~~88. The Education Welfare Service may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.~~
- ~~89. A Fixed Penalty Notice, when requested by a Head Teacher, can be issued if the following criteria apply:~~
- ~~• 20 sessions or more unauthorised absences by the child during a 12 week period.~~
  - ~~• Other than in specific circumstances\*, the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility or a Penalty Notice being issued and given 15 school days to affect improvement. Within the 15-day period, further unauthorised absence will trigger the issue of a notice without warning.~~
- ~~*\*the deliberate taking of a holiday in term time without/against school permission (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had/would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term if at least 10 sessions (5 days).*~~
90. In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority reserves the right to:
- Issue a penalty notice for a first offence
  - Issue a penalty notice without warning

## Children Missing in Education (CME)

91. **Position Statement** – national definition of children who are not receiving a suitable education:  
*“A compulsory school age child who is not on the roll of a school, not placed in alternative provision by a local authority and who is not receiving a suitable education at home” (revised statutory guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education January 2009).*
92. ERYC’s Children Missing from Education protocol is designed to support professionals across Children and Young People Services, partners and stakeholders in their combined efforts to safeguard children who are missing in education. Its aim is to identify the practical steps to be taken by professionals to locate and track children and young people missing from education.
93. If any child is absent without explanation for 10 consecutive days, the school will notify the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Education Welfare Service. The school will include details of the actions taken to ascertain reason for their absence from school. No child will be removed from roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and Education Welfare Service, when appropriate.
94. Please refer to ERYC’s CME protocols.

## Bullying/Harassment

95. Our schools do not condone bullying or harassment by children, members of staff or parents. If any form of this behaviour occurs, it will be dealt with as a very serious matter. No one should feel they cannot attend school for fear of being bullied or harassed.

## Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation

96. Children who go missing or are persistently absent from school may be an indicator of exploitation, especially if other key factors are also present. Some other potential signs of criminal or sexual exploitation are:
  - missing from home and/or being found out-of-area;
  - unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, or mobile phones
  - excessive receipt of texts/phone calls and/or having multiple handsets
  - relationships with controlling/older individuals or groups
  - leaving home/care without explanation
  - suspicion of physical or sexual assault/unexplained injuries
  - parental concerns
  - carrying weapons
  - significant decline in school results/performance
  - gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
  - self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.
97. In our trust we monitor absenteeism daily to ascertain children’s whereabouts to ensure they are safe from harm. We will work endlessly with all statutory and non-statutory agencies, including parents/carer to protect any child at risk or at possible risk of this form of abuse. If any member of staff is concerned about a child who is regularly absent and also presents with any of the signs listed above, they must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.



**Children's Details**

Child's name	D. O. B.	School Name	Year/Class

*Please add all children to one form*

**Parents' Details**

Parent's full name	Parent's Telephone	D. O. B.

**Home address of Parent(s) responsible for this absence**

Address	Email address

**I request permission for my child(ren) to be absent from school between:-**

First date of absence:	Date of return to school:	Total of absent school days:

All requests should be discussed with the Head Teacher prior to submitting this form.

Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Head Teacher will not consider your request without your supporting documents.

***Please read carefully the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents attached.***

Reason for Absence Request (please attach supporting documents):

**Parents<sup>3</sup> Declaration:**

*I have read the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence equals 10 sessions.*

(Parent/Carer 1) Signed:  Full Name:  Date:	(Parent/Carer 2) Signed:  Full Name:  Date:
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**For School Use Only**

The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows:-

<b>Number of authorised sessions:</b>		<b>Number of unauthorised sessions:</b>		<b>Number of unauthorised sessions to date:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>  <b>Position:</b> Head Teacher  <b>Date:</b>					

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Head Teachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.
- Any disagreement between estranged parents should be resolved prior to submitting this request to your child's school.
- Original signed and completed forms to be retained with child's records.
- Copy should be returned to the parent/carer of the child to confirm authorised or unauthorised absence prior to the intended absence period.

<sup>3</sup> Parent: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or (b) who has care of him. (*Education Act 1996 sec.576*)



## Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents

1. There is no longer a provision in law for Head teachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday.
2. You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. This has been defined by the Supreme Court as ‘in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school’ meaning attending every occasion available unless authorised by the Head Teacher. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Head teachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Please note this is **not an entitlement**. The Head teacher will only authorise absence in line with the East Riding Behaviour & Attendance Partnership ‘Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances’ Policy. Head teachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child’s education. **Please note that supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.**
3. Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child’s attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates’ Court.

### Penalty Notices

4. Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the Head teacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent. If your child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, you may be liable for a penalty notice (one day’s absence equals two sessions and a five-day absence is equal to 10 sessions etc.).
5. Penalty Notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post direct to the home of a parent after possibly just one warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given. This includes children caught on truancy sweeps, persistent late arrival after the close of registration **or unauthorised absence that has not been authorised as an absence from school for exceptional circumstances**. In these cases, the warning is given on the absence request form and detailed within this information leaflet and no written warning will be given. Where parents do not follow school procedures of submitting a request and simply remove their child without seeking prior approval, a warning may not be given. Parents must complete a request for exceptional leave form and submit this to the school, allowing for sufficient time to enable the school to consider the request and inform the parent of the decision.
6. Fines are issued for unauthorised absence of 5 or more days and each school day is divided into 2 registration periods. **For example, if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions, and a five-day absence is equal to 10 sessions.**
  - If your request is declined and you take your child out of school each person with day-to-day care of the child(ren) may be issued with a £160 penalty notice if paid within 28 days this reduces to £80 if paid within 21 days. If after 28 days the fine remains unpaid you may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.
  - Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice within 3 years of the first penalty notice, the second penalty notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. If after 28 days the fine remains unpaid you may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

## Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents



- If a third penalty notice referral is received within a 3-year period, a further penalty notice fine cannot be issued and legal action will be considered.
- Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve an improvement, please contact your child's school to discuss this.
- **We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Head teachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.**

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## Attendance Code

The following National attendance codes will be used to ensure absence is recorded in a consistent way:

- # = planned whole school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Absent due to a lack of access arrangements or due to the pupil having to attend a school that does not qualify for travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- W = Attending work experience
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant children who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Children who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

### Absconding

Children will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a child going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the head teacher immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the head teacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Changing rooms
  - The library
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after **10 minutes**, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The absent pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any **SEND**, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The head teacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The head teacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.

A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.