



Attendance Policy

Ernest Bevin Academy

The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Responsibility: Assistant Principal

Date Approved: September 2022

Reviewed by: Principal

Review Date: September 2023

Links to other Policies:

CIP (school's improvement plan)

SEND policy

Behaviour for Learning policy

Attendance Team and Role	Contact Information
Attendance Officer – Miss S Sweeny	ssweeny@ernestbevin.london
Senior Champion Attendance – Mr D Smith	dsmith@ernestbevin.london

Aims

1. To target overall attendance to be at least 96%.
2. To raise the profile of the importance of high-level attendance among students, parents and other staff.
3. To outline the procedure for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies.

Objectives

1. To encourage students to attend and be punctual through the use of an appropriate reward system.
2. To record and monitor attendance accurately throughout the day.
3. To inform families of absence or lateness promptly, using the APP (Edulink) or text messages.
4. To intervene in a timely manner where a student's attendance or punctuality is a cause for concern.
5. To monitor the attendance rates of all students, year groups and groups of learners, being mindful of the groups of learners vulnerable to having lower rates of attendance.

Guidelines

1. Electronic registers will be kept by tutors and class teachers in a way that provides, in all circumstances, an accurate record of attendance for all students. Students in Key Stage 5 may self-register using Inventory.
2. All tutors are accountable to their Head of Year for completing registers.
3. Staff, and especially tutors, should make clear to students that registration is an important part of the preparation for each day.
4. Staff should make clear to students that the principle of punctuality is both a courtesy and an essential requirement for a well-ordered learning environment.
5. Praise, and in certain circumstances material rewards, should be used to encourage attendance and punctuality. Students who have been absent for an extended period for whatever reason must be welcomed back into the school.
6. The Assistant Principal and the Attendance and Welfare Officer, who co-ordinates the system, will ensure that procedures operate effectively so that all appropriate information regarding non-attendance or poor punctuality is passed to the Education Welfare Service, this will often take place within discussions at the Inclusion Panel.

Attendance Practice – Responsibilities

Improving attendance is a whole school initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, students and all members of school staff.

The table below highlights the whole school approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. This is led by the Attendance Team, who work with the pastoral team to monitor and improve attendance, while raising the profile and emphasising the importance of attendance at individual and whole school level.

98 – 100% Attendance	Blue Group	No Risk – students are accessing all learning opportunities
96% - 97.9% Attendance	Green Group	Risk of underachievement – very few learning opportunities are missed
94% - 95.9% Attendance	Yellow Group	Serious risk of underachievement – up to 10 school days absent in an academic year
90% - 93.9% Attendance	Orange Group	Severe risk of underachievement – Up to 19 school days absent in the academic year
0% - 89.9% Attendance	Red Group	Court action – upwards of 22 days absent in the academic year

Students

As part of Ernest Bevin Academy's drive to encourage student responsibility, students should ensure that they:

- Attend on time every day and aim for 100% attendance. This means leaving home for their journey to school at a time which ensures that they will arrive before 8.40am and allows for any possible delays caused by their mode of transport.
- Understand that their parents / carers will be subject to fines if their attendance is consistently below 90% over a period of time, or the student is persistently late to school.
- If late, attend the detention at the end of the day.
- Bring an explanatory note from parents / carers on the day of returning to the school which should be shown to the Attendance and Welfare Officer, if a reason for the absences has not been given.

Parent / Carers

- Are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time. Attending regularly means registering before the morning register is closed for the session. This is because all absence affects student's progress and their ability to meet their potential.
- Must inform the Attendance and Welfare Officer on the first day of non-attendance if their child is ill and unable to attend school. The parent / carer must provide a reason for the absence and provide medical evidence for any absence over three days. This can include a doctor's note, appointment cards or a letter from the GP or hospital.
- Must not remove their children from school before the end of the school day.
- Must not take holidays / leave in term time.

Tutor

All tutors have a duty of care to the students in their tutor group and are responsible for attendance of this group. This means;

- Every morning, taking an accurate, electronic version of the register in tutor time.
- All tutors are accountable to their Head of Year for completing registers on time and accurately.
- Year 7-11 tutors and Heads of Year to provide intervention for students who are within the blue, green, yellow and orange attendance categories supplied by the Attendance Team.

Class Teacher

All classroom teachers have a legal duty to provide accurate registers of students within their classes. Class teachers are responsible for taking the register accurately at the beginning of each lesson.

Heads of Year / Head of Sixth Form

The Heads of Year work with the Senior Leadership and Attendance Teams to create and maintain an ethos of achievement which rewards outstanding attendance and punctuality.

- Praising students in assemblies and presenting certificates for 100% attendance and for having outstanding punctuality.
- Meeting with the Attendance and Welfare Officer to monitor the progress of students' attendance.
- To provide intervention for students in the Orange Group between 90% and 93.9% attendance and log interventions.
- Liaising with the Attendance and Welfare Officer to analyse students within the year group whose attendance has fallen below 90% and take actions to improve this attendance.

Attendance and Welfare Officer

The Attendance and Welfare Officer is the first point of contact for parent / carers when they phone the school about an attendance concern. The Attendance and Welfare Officer will:

- Monitor and inform Heads of Year, tutors and teachers of any registers not taken.
- Input / check daily attendance figures.
- Support the signing in of students who are late to school after registration.
- Send out absent messages to parents by 11.30am at the latest. Where a student is marked absent (N mark) a text message or APP notification will be sent to the nominated mobile number by the Attendance and Welfare Officer or a member of the Admin team.
- On a daily basis contact all parents by phone who have not informed the school of the reason for the student's absence.
- Completes a weekly attendance report.
- Parents must provide an explanation of absence on the day of absence either by letter, APP message, note in planner or telephone. The Attendance and Welfare Officer will then authorise the absence using the appropriate code in their registers.

- The Attendance and Welfare Officer meets half termly with each Head of Year. This may result in a supportive series of actions or in a legal response for persistent or frequent non-attenders.
- Where a student has been absent for an extended period – through serious ill health or injury – a meeting with the family should be held by the tutor, HOY or Attendance and Welfare Officer and a suitable plan put in place. If a temporary arrangement is made for a shorter school day the EWS (Educational Welfare Service) must be informed.
- Will only authorise 8 school days (16 sessions) of absence in a rolling year (the preceding 12 months) unless specific medical evidence is provided explaining that the student's medical needs are such that a volume of absence exceeding 8 days per year are unavoidable.

The Attendance and Welfare Officer is also responsible for students whose attendance falls below 90%. They will:

- Analyse all the Persistent Absence (PAs) on a weekly basis and share the information with each Head of Year and liaise with the Assistant Principal.
- Coordinate attendance panel meetings for attendees below 90%.
- Coordinate programmes and interventions for non-attendees.
- Undertake home visits for students who have persistently low attendance below 90%.
- Organise all fines for parents of students whose attendance stays below 90% or who is persistently late.
- Log and record all interventions.

Positive Reinforcement

In order to promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, Ernest Bevin Academy uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies.

As appropriate these include:

- Display of individual attendance
- Display of tutor attendance
- Certificates
- Letters home
- Mentions in assemblies
- Weekly 100% attendance Prize Draw

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

If a student is absent, it is vital that a parent contacts the Attendance and Welfare Officer at the earliest opportunity to provide a sufficient reason for absence. This should be by telephone or email in the first instance supported by any appropriate evidence on the student's return. Absence can only be authorised where there is a good cause. If no sufficient reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised.

Parents / carers cannot authorise absence. This is a decision that rests with Ernest Bevin Academy in accordance within the boundaries set by The Education Regulations 1996 (Pupil Registration).

Where deemed necessary, Ernest Bevin Academy reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness.

Lateness

Students are expected to arrive at school by 8.40am for an 8.45am start to the morning session. Afternoon registration is marked directly from attendance at period 5. Students who are late for the morning session will be checked in at reception and be expected to attend a detention on the same day. The school will only authorise lateness for bone fide medical appointments. If proof of an appointment is not provided a late detention may be issued. Students who are regularly late will receive some form of intervention - this may include the use of fixed penalty notices. In this case, lateness must not be authorised and the 'U' code used.

Holidays and Appointments During Term Time

Families should not take term time holidays. Any application should be made using a proforma that can be found on the school website. A decision will be made by the Principal – taking into account the reason for the trip, the student's attendance history over the rolling preceding 12 months and whether other term time holidays have been taken recently. Unauthorised holiday must be marked with G and a fixed penalty notice issued via Educational Welfare.

Appointments

- Parents should arrange all appointments outside of school hours or in the school holidays wherever possible.
- If an appointment is during school hours parents must make every effort to ensure their child attends before or after the appointment.
- Only half a day will be authorised if a whole day is taken for a short appointment, i.e Dentist or GP.
- No absence for appointments will be authorised without proof of an appointment.
- Parents must inform the school if their child needs to leave early for an appointment; students will not be allowed to leave without parental permission. Parents must let the school know by phoning in, emailing or via EduLink – not a written note. Proof of appointment does not count as parental permission to leave the school site.

Persistent Absence

- This is defined as attendance below 90% over a reasonable period.
- Heads of Year meet regularly (weekly) with the Attendance and Welfare Officer to monitor, discuss and plan for students who are a cause of concern.
- Persistent or frequent non-attenders will be formally referred to the EWS – the school employs an Attendance and Welfare Officer. This may result in supportive actions and / or a legal response. Care should be taken to distinguish between students who are regularly absent for spurious reasons, who truant and those who have acute or chronic medical conditions or have experienced significant events.

Legal Action

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends Ernest Bevin Academy on a

regular and punctual basis. Should any student's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be subject to further investigation and action will be taken. Where necessary, Ernest Bevin Academy will recommend legal action. Ernest Bevin Academy and the Local Authority work together in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal actions include:

- **Penalty Notice:** A Penalty Notice, per parent in the household per child, may be issued for each student who has unauthorised absence or lateness. The penalty is a £60 fine, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within the 42 day period, a prosecution will be sought.
- **Prosecution for unauthorised absence:** It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered student at Ernest Bevin Academy. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and/or impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

Safeguarding

The school is aware that low attendance is often associated with safeguarding concerns. The Attendance and Welfare Officer is a member of the school's Inclusion Panel who meet weekly to discuss and monitor vulnerable students.

Any student who is absent for more than 3 days without a suitable reason being provided and with no contact from the family should be considered as a potential 'Child Missing Education' and must be immediately referred to the EWS.

Leaving the School Premises

- Students in Years 7 to 11 must not leave the school premises without the signed permission from a member of the Senior Leadership Team and parental consent being given beforehand.
- Students must sign out at reception before leaving school for a pre-arranged and authorised appointment and sign in upon their return.
- Students in Years 12 and 13 may leave during lunchtime but must 'touch in and out'.

Supporting and Working with Parents / Carers

In order to support parents / carers in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual student attendance, Ernest Bevin Academy seeks to keep parents / carers informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents on attendance issues. Methods include:

- Attendance and Welfare Officer daily phone calls for students who do not attend school.
- Tutor phone calls home for students whose attendance is starting to cause concern.
- Head of Year phone calls home for students whose attendance is causing a serious risk of underachievement.
- Parental meetings by members of the pastoral team (tutor, Head of Year, Attendance and Welfare Officer).
- Student Reports.
- Parents' Meetings.