



## Exclusion Policy

<b>Reviewed by</b>	Helen Dyer, School Principal
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## **Aims**

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every learner has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## **Legislation and Statutory Guidance**

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

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [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.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***The School Advisory Panel***

Is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

### ***The Principal***

Is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the senior leadership team.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### ***The Attendance, Family Liaison and Welfare Lead***

Is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual learner level.
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the principal.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advising the principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The Attendance, Family Liaison and Welfare Lead is also responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Support staff are responsible for marking the paper registration with the time a learner enters and leaves the school site. All staff members are also responsible for sharing information regarding absence they have received with the school Attendance, Family Liaison and Welfare Lead.

### ***School Office Staff***

Are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **Recording Attendance**

### ***Attendance Register***

We will keep an attendance register and place all learners onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every learner is:

- Present.
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity.

- Absent.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Learners must arrive in school by 9.00 a.m. on each school day. Tutor time is 8.45 a.m. – 9.00 a.m. for children who are in school. The school opens at 8.30 a.m. The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 a.m. and will be kept open until 9.10 a.m. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30 p.m. and will be kept open until 1.15 p.m.

### **Unplanned Absence**

The learner's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00 a.m. or as soon as practically possible. This could be via email or phone call to the school office, school administration team or a member of the class team. We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the learner's parent/carer 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 school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this.

### **Planned Absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the learner's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the learner should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The learner's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 details which term-time absences the school can authorise.

### **Lateness and Punctuality**

A learner who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Where we have concerns regarding punctuality, we will communicate this with the parent/carer and liaise with the relevant transport providers, if appropriate. We will monitor and review regularly to support learners in attending school on time.

### **Following Up Absence**

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phoning, texting, and emailing the contacts listed for the child.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary – this may include a home visit, referrals to MASH, consultation with Bromley designated EWO.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use.

### **Reporting to Parents**

Annual attendance figures will be included in reports at least twice a year, unless there are concerns regarding attendance during the school year. Looked after children's attendance will be reported to the relevant Virtual School every day and a summative attendance figure will be shared at every PEP. Attendance will also be shared during every child's annual review meeting and this information will be submitted to the relevant local authority.

## **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

### **Approval for Term-Time Absence**

The principal will only grant a leave of absence to learners during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller learners travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (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 school, but it is not known whether the learner is attending educational provision.
- Periods where learners require a reduced timetable due to medical, physical, and mental health needs.

### **Reducing Persistent Absence**

If we have concerns regarding attendance, we will contact the family to discuss these and find out how we can help and support the family in ensuring attendance improves – this could involve support with transport. If a social worker is involved with the family, they will be invited to take part in these conversations to enable group working. If unauthorised absence continues, a formal notice of concern will be sent in writing from the Assistant Principal (Behaviour and Welfare) and shared with relevant professionals involved – such as social care and the local authority. If attendance continues to be a concern, a referral to MASH may be made due to safeguarding concerns. If social care is already involved in supporting the family, DSLs will liaise with the named social worker to raise the level of support in place.

### **Legal Sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. Penalty notices can be issued by a principal, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of 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 learner 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 or withdraw the notice.

### **Attendance Monitoring**

The Attendance, Family Liaison and Welfare Lead at our school monitors learner absence daily. A learner's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. If a learner's absence goes above five days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the learner to discuss the reasons for this. If a learner's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we contact the parents to arrange an attendance improvement meeting (AIP) and seek advice from the Bromley EWO service. The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a learner's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the learner will be classified as a persistent absentee. When this situation occurs, we will follow the process laid out in the flow chart in Appendix 1.

**Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the senior leadership team. At every review, the policy will be approved by the school advisory panel.

**Under 95% or 5% of possible sessions**

(for example, 70/74 sessions = 94.59% HT1).

School to consider- early intervention check list / TAC.  
Discussion with family or learner (age dependant).

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Under 92% (for example 68/74 sessions HT1 =91.89%)  
Further absence recorded in the same term:

- Letter 2 expression of concern
- Consider/Offer - early Help Assessment/TAC

Further absence recorded in same term and no medical evidence supplied. School to send Letter 3 inviting them to attend an intervention/ support meeting.

- Early Help Assessment/TAC to be considered
- Parenting contract to be considered/actioned (6-week action plan, to be reviewed and amended weekly to ensure impact)

Letter 4 Pre referral invite to attend meeting with AAO.

- Early Help Assessment/TAC to be considered
- Parenting contract to be considered/actioned (6-week action plan, to be reviewed and amended weekly to ensure impact)

Parent/carers attends, or fails to attend meeting and learner has 10% or more UA absence recorded. **Letter 5a or 5b to be sent to parent.** Warning of further unauthorised absence can lead to a referral to AAO.

**AFL&WL/AAS Action:**

AAO to send parent/carer a referral letter and parental Court Warning/ Penalty Notice Warning letter. Further U/A absence leads to further absence letter/meeting/ conversations.

ESO meeting feedback discussed with a manager before legal action is commenced.

- The UA absence recorded will be considered -Pre-Court Conference to be arranged by AFL&WL in school.
- A decision will be made by Court Officer to issue a PN.
- £120 Penalty Notice (per child) or hold a PCC.
- Legal action under section 444 (1a) The Education Act 1996.

Identifying any difficulties the family are experiencing that may be impacting on the learner's attendance including :

- Sign-post to other agencies including universal services.
- Follow steps on flow chart – Part 2.

**Action for letter 2 and letter 3.**

Discussion with AFL&WL to review support to date and agree individual attendance plan.

A learner that has more than **10% UA** absence and parent fails to attend the meeting with no correspondence:

School to send letter 4 pre referral meeting invite with AFL&WL.

Further UA absence recorded, (after discussion with school's AFL&WL)

School sends Letter 6 informing parent of the referral to AAS. Then **referral** to the AAS.

**Before legal action:**

School/AFL&WL and parent meeting. Review parenting contract/ actions/ referrals and attendance. Consider an Education Supervision Order (ESO). If parent does not attend or engage with the process a MASH referral should be considered/ made.

The AAS can issue FPN (without PCC taking place beforehand) ESO meeting feedback discussed with a manager before legal action is commenced /PN issued.