ATTENDANCE POLICY

2023/2024

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

Ealing Alternative Provision strives to encourage our pupils to attend school regularly, so that they are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Good attendance and punctuality are essential for all pupils if they are to achieve their full potential, both academically and socially.

AIMS

We are committed to meeting our obligation concerning school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance.
- o Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- o Promote good attendance
- o Act early to identify patterns of absence
- o To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and to ensure that the student is provided with every opportunity to reach their full potential.
- o To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have support in place to attend school.
- o To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- o To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including multi-agency teams and the Borough Court Officer in cases of persistent unauthorised absences.
- o To adopt a whole school approach with the aim of creating awareness among the whole school population of the importance of good attendance and punctuality in relation to attainment.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance 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

It also refers to:

> School census guidance

> Keeping Children Safe in Education

> Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITES

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

- **Parents**

    - Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance to school in correct uniform and in a fit condition to learn. Parents are also responsible for ensuring that their children stay at school once they have registered.
    - Parents may not authorise a child's absence – only the school can do this based on the explanation provided by the parents. Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school would record such absence as unauthorised?
    - Parents can expect the school to keep them informed of any attendance and punctuality issues and they can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their children.

They should

    - Take an active interest in their child's school life and work.
    - Ensure homework is completed.
    - Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the doctors, dentist etc. outside of school hours.
    - Ask the school for help if their child is having trouble or refuses to come to school.
    - Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance.
    - Encourage routine at home, for example, going to bed at an appropriate time, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
    - Not keep their child off school to celebrate birthdays, go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
    - Schools are not legally permitted to authorise holiday in term time, so please do not enquire.

Pupils

- o Attend every timetabled lesson
- o Arrive on time for every timetabled lesson
- o Attend breakfast club to support their punctuality

Management Committee

- o To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- o To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.
- o To be in receipt of an attendance report at termly Management Committee Meetings.

Head teacher

- o To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- o Implementation of this policy at EAP
- o To provide the Management Committee with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice on a termly basis.
- o Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

- o To lead attendance across the school
- o Offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- o Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- o Have an oversight of data analysis
- o Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

Administration Staff

- o To record messages re pupil absence/lateness and to pass on information to relevant staff i.e. Attendance Officer.
- o Transfer calls from parents/carers and pupils to the pastoral leads in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Attendance officer
- o Monitor attendance via 'inventry' system and take morning register.
- o Telephone parents on the first day of unexplained student absence, if no response a T2P text will be sent for confirmation of absence. If no response, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- o Liaise with Pastoral Leads, Pupil and Family Worker, the APST re: Attendance issues
- o To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the SIMS Attendance Manager System via Synergy portal.
- o To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports where necessary.
- o To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- o To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality
- o To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue.
- o To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance
- o To arrange meetings including home visits with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- o To offer parents of pupils with poor attendance a Parental/School Contract
- o If no improvement is seen in a pupil's attendance after the above steps have been taken, refer the case to local authority CME/Attendance officer
- o Advice head teacher re- fixed penalty notices issued by the local authority.

Tutor and class teachers
- o Responsible for recording class attendance on 'synergy' using the correct codes. Inform the office of any absences.
- o To organise work on google classroom for pupils in their tutor group who are expected to be absent for an extended period.
- o Discuss attendance and punctuality issues with parents on a weekly basis and discuss strategy during SDF meetings

Absence
- o All students are registered at the check-in monitor 'inventry' and attendance and lateness are recorded.
- o Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 9.30am, will be considered as late
- o If a pupil absence is unexplained for two days a home visit takes place by the Pupil and Family Worker.
- o Parents are informed by text message on a daily basis if their child is late to school. If a student is persistently late throughout a week, the Attendance Officer sends a letter to the parents/carers.

o If a student has persistent lateness over a period of time, the parents/carers are requested to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer.

Unplanned absence
o Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the everyday of absence to provide the reason for the absence and on each subsequent day of absence. Parents/carers should provide a written explanation on their child's return to school.
o Where the Attendance Officer is not made aware of the reason for a child's absence, they will contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence.

Unauthorised Absences
o Unauthorised absences over a 6 week period may result in the loss of EAP placement
o We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

   Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

Following up unexplained absence

o Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit and if concerned may contact the police

o Identify whether the absence is approved or not

o Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

o Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

Medical or Dental Appointments
- o Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments.
- o Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointment out of school hours.

Holidays during Term Time
- o Amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations remove all references to family holidays and extended leave for holidays in term time. The amendments make clear that the Head may not grant any leave of absence during term unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is for the Head to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and for her to determine the number of days a student can be away from school if the leave is granted.
- o Continuity of learning is essential and the DfE require a minimum average attendance of 95%. DfE guidance states that taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time both educationally and for other activities. It is calculated that children who miss two weeks school per year miss 5% of their education.
- o In the case of an unauthorised holiday, the Local Authority will be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice may be issued. Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. Unauthorised absences are an offence under section 444 of the education act 1996 (2006 amended). Parents are warned that if they take leave without authorisation the Local Authority has the power to issue Fixed-Penalty Notices of £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Parents may be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and pull payment has not been made.

- o **Other Absence**

   Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or unauthorised the absence.

Approval for term-time absence

The head teacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in writing to the Head Teacher. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents /carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveler pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, 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 pupil is attending educational provision

REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

All absences both authorised, unauthorised absence and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer throughout the academic year within their child's report.

Parents are informed each term on their child's attendance and punctuality.

REWARDS

o Pupils who achieve 100% attendance will receive a certificate
o A voucher is presented to the student who has maintained the best attendance and punctuality throughout a term.
o Certificates will be awarded for pupils with most improvement in their attendance and punctuality.

EAP defines our key levels of attendance as:

Attendance	Days lost per year	Weeks lost per year
98-100%	0-4	Less than 1
95-98%	5-9	1 to 2

93-95%	**10-13**	**2 to 3**
85-93%	**14-28**	**3 to 6**
Below 90%	**More than 25**	**More than 5**

Green **=** **Good Attendance**

Amber **=** **Attendance requires improvement**

Red **=** **Attendance is a cause for concern**

ATTENDANCE CODES

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
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
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason

		for pupil's absence

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- o Attendance data will be collected at agreed intervals to establish patterns of irregular attendance
- o A meeting will be held each term between the Attendance Officer and the Borough Court Officer to highlight and discuss attendance concerns with a view to prosecute.
- o The Head teacher will review the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Head teacher will recommend an attendance target to the Management Committee.
- o The Management Committee will set an annual target of attendance and unauthorised absence and review this annually at its first meeting.