Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire

Attendance policy

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1. 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 student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled, which maximises their opportunities for learning and progress
- To provide a welcoming and supportive environment in which all members of our school feel safe and valued, and consequently strive to succeed
- Acting early to address patterns of absence by working closely with parents and carers to address concerns
- To embed a fair and effective system of rewards and consequences which acknowledges students' efforts, attendance and punctuality
- To celebrate high attendance by Tutor Groups and Year Groups

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. Constructive, prompt and effective two-way communication is vital if this is to be achieved.

We aim for all students to achieve at least 96% attendance during the academic year.

2. Legislation and 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 (Student 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board 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.

3.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

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

3.3 The Attendance Officer and Pastoral Team

The school Attendance Officer and Pastoral Team:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal and Senior Management
- Works with Education Inclusion Services to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Makes home visits
- Advises the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.5 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system and liaise with other staff as necessary.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students 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 student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Attending an approved alternative educational provision
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Unauthorised absence

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at the beginning of Period 4.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7) and on each subsequent days unless the length of absence has previously been agreed.

This should be done via telephone 01724 878100 or using the email address: attendance@enlutc.co.uk

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 student'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 in advance.

The school reserves the right to contact parents or home visit as and when necessary.

Please note: If an absence pattern emerges or concerns are raised regarding attendance, absences for illnesses may not be authorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment unless there are concerns over the current attendance. Evidence of such appointments must be provided to the school in order for these to be authorised.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and the appointment be made at the start or the end of the school day. Full day absences are not authorised unless in exceptional circumstances.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Routine annual check-ups, eg opticians will not be authorised as can easily be taken out of school time.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)
- All students who arrive late will need to sign in through reception to ensure they are recorded in school for safeguarding and fire registers.
- Students who are consistently late will be placed on punctuality report.
- Students will receive a detention on the same day or the next available day of 20 minutes.

4.5 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 telephone, email or home visit.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- The school operates a daily absence notification procedure. Parents are expected to inform the school each day a child is ill, including if a child was sent home the previous day through illness, unless the length of absence period has been agreed by the attendance officer.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported to parents via student academic tracking reports which are issued twice yearly. Parents can request attendance figures from the school at any time by telephone or via the school admin email address.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion.

'Exceptional circumstances' are at the discretion of the Principal. The Principal will not authorise absences if they are deemed to be detrimental to a student's education.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place

Unauthorised absence when term-time holiday will not be approved, includes:

- Attending Weddings/Birthdays
- Attending concerts, theatres or similar activities
- Family holidays
- Study leave – study leave is not granted until nearing the end of the exam period. A specific date is communicated to parents and students.
- Sporting Activities
- Missing public transport (eg bus or train)
- Illness, where a child is considered well enough to attend school.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

When a student has a concerning attendance pattern, an attendance procedure is triggered. Contact will be made with home via telephone discussions/meetings/letter. If no improvement is witnessed, further communication will be made. Attendance plans are put in place to identify relevant support and interventions if there is not sufficient improvement. This should have a positive impact upon a student's attendance figures. If

this fails to improve attendance, referrals will be made to the Education Inclusion Service. Early Help Assessments may be implemented to co-ordinate strategies for raising attendance. Details of how to access wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance.

5.3 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.

The decision on whether or not 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 student 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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance is pivotal in supporting all students to make the best possible educational progress, and as such rewards are provided as follows:

- Top attending registration group each week all receive Professional points.
- All students with 100% attendance for the previous week will be entered in to a prize draw and will also receive Professional points.
- Letters may be sent to parents half termly for all students demonstrating improved attendance.
- Half termly celebrations may be held in school for all students with 100% attendance or showing a significant improvement in attendance
- All students with 100% attendance at the end of the school year attend a celebration event

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors student absence on a daily basis.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

For safeguarding purposes, the school operates a daily absence notification procedure. Parents are expected to inform the school each day a child is absent. This includes if a child was collected from school the previous day through illness, unless the length of absence period has already been agreed by the attendance officer.

If a student's absence causes concern, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a student's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

UTC collects and stores attendance data, and it may be used to:

- Track the attendance of individual students
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Richard Endicott, Assistant Principal. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student 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 student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day