

Earlscliffe (Earlscliffe Ltd)

Policy: Student Attendance Policy

Members of SLT responsible: Deputy Head (Academic) & Deputy Head (Pastoral Boarding)

Date of review: June 2025

Date of next review: June 2026

This Policy makes direct references to the DfE document, 'Working together to improve school attendance' August 2024. Further information can be found in this document and will be referred to by the school in all instances of attendance concerns. The Deputy Head (Academic) acts as the School's Attendance Champion with regard to ensuring the timely and accurate completion of registers; the Deputy Head (Pastoral & Boarding) acts as the School's Attendance Champion with regard to working with Senior Tutors to monitor attendance and engage with students and parents as required.

We want to support all of our students and their parents/guardians so that they have the best possible experience and reach their full potential. Students with excellent attendance are more successful in school and achieve significantly higher outcomes.

Low attendance can be seen as a safeguarding concern (KCSIE) and is a whole school responsibility and priority. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra familial harms, including crime (the proportion of children that had been cautioned or sentenced for any offence that had ever been persistently absent was 81% and for serious violence offences was 85%).

The law entitles every child of a school age to a full-time education suitable to their age and any additional needs. Whilst we recognise that some medical conditions or SEND may provide barriers to education, the student's right to education remains the same as their peers. We will strive to work with families and students to minimise the barriers students face and put in additional support where necessary to ensure that all students are able to access their full-time education.

We recognise that there can be barriers to school attendance and for some students it

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is harder to attend school than others so we will continue to work closely with parents/guardians, seeking their support throughout the student's time with us. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently but will consider the individual needs of the student and their family.

It is the legal responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that their child accesses education either within a school or by education other than a school. This means the student must attend the college every day it is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances.

We would like everyone to maintain 100% attendance and it is our expectation that all students achieve at least 95% attendance.

The school will work with parents, guardians and students to

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is

also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents of day students perform their legal duty by ensuring their children attend regularly and are punctual.

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Attendance figures are published to the governing body through the Governors Report.

The Deputy Heads have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with staff, students, parents and external agencies where needed. They set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school. They regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes and are responsible for implementation of this policy at the school, monitoring absence data and reporting it to governors and Head Teacher and supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.

The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible to ensure class and group tutor registration registers are accurate and completed using the relevant DfE absence codes (see Appendix 1) day to day.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding) is responsible for leading and supporting cases of persistent absence and monitoring absence data in liaison with the Deputy Head (Academic) and reporting it to the Head Teacher and governors.

The Deputy Heads monitor attendance data across the school and, in liaison with Senior Tutors, at an individual student level to support early intervention, reducing absence before it becomes habitual. They report concerns about attendance/punctuality to the Head Teacher to tackle persistent absence/punctuality issues.

Senior Tutors lead on the communication with parents to discuss attendance issues.

Absence

If there is a planned absence, for example a medical appointment, the parent/guardian of day students should notify the school in advance. Boarding students should make medical appointments in liaison with the School Nurse.

We encourage parents/guardians of all students to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of education for the minimum amount of time necessary. If an appointment is arranged by the school, they will be marked “authorised absence” by teachers. If an appointment is made by a parent/guardian, the school should be informed by phone or email at least 24 hours in advance.

All students’ parents/guardians must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible. The final decision on whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised rests with the school.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student’s parent/guardian to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor’s note or proof of the appointment or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

Parents/guardians, onsite medical staff, Senior Tutors and senior boarding staff are the only people, other than the Deputy Heads and Head Teacher, who can authorise absences. All absences are recorded on ISAMS and parents/guardians will be notified by email of any unauthorised absence.

Unwell boarding students will be supported by the boarding team and the school Nurse. If a student is too unwell to attend classes, they will be marked out by the appropriate staff member.

If a parent/guardian requires an absence of a student out of school during term time (for example a family holiday), they should put the request in writing to the student's Senior Tutor as early as possible. Please note that such a request will only be approved in exceptional circumstances, and you should not make any bookings before approval has been granted.

Students absent without permission from boarding will be dealt with through our Missing Students Policy.

Absenteeism

Any student whose attendance at lessons falls below 95% will attend an absence meeting with their Senior Tutor. Disciplinary procedures or welfare interventions will be followed as appropriate.

Persistent absenteeism is attendance below 95%. Senior Tutors will check the attendance data provided and follow up on any patterns of non-attendance. Through regular monitoring, students who are identified as needing additional support with attendance will be targeted and the relevant actions discussed with the student and their parents/guardians. If there is no improvement, despite a collaborative effort, an escalation of support may be required. Depending on the individual circumstances, there may be a requirement for a multi-disciplinary support, a targeted support meeting, parenting contract, involvement from the Local Authority Attendance Support Team or Integrated Children's Services. If there is still no improvement, the local authority may seek legal intervention.

Attendance Monitoring

The Deputy Head (Academic) is responsible for monitoring the recording of student absence and punctuality by teachers and Group Tutors at morning and afternoon Registration. ISAMS is the school's information management system and is used to record

attendance. The Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding) will, in liaison with Senior Tutors, analyse attendance data to inform practices and next steps for individual students and cohorts who may need support.

Lesson Registers - A register is taken for each timetabled lesson and group tutor period. Teachers should take the register within the first 10 minutes of the lesson and report any missing students who have not arrived within the first 10 minutes. This should be done using the alert function on the electronic register. Any student arriving after the first ten minutes of a lesson where parental or boarding notification of such lateness has not been provided, should be marked as absent and sent to meet with their Senior Tutor.

Attendance Registers - An AM and PM register is recorded each day at Group Tutor Registration and constitutes the school's Attendance Register.

For UKVI purposes, the school recognises a contact point each day Monday to Friday (when the school is open) if either an AM or PM register has been marked as present a contact point is met.

A student's absence from a tutor group registration is automatically flagged to Senior Tutors who will follow up on the absence immediately and make the Deputy Head (Academic) aware of any such absence.

Boarding - boarding staff complete a register each evening to ensure all students living in their boarding house are present in their boarding house.

Sponsored Students

Good attendance is part of the conditions of stay for sponsored students studying in the UK. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure accurate attendance monitoring and prompt follow up. We may cease sponsorship of students who fail to meet the attendance requirements or those who miss ten consecutive contact points without authorisation from the Head Teacher.

Students missing 5 contact points without authorisation will be subject to a Pastoral Review with the Head Teacher and Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding). The student's Senior Tutor will also be in attendance at this meeting. This meeting will put in place a plan to support the student improving attendance or allow the school to increase support and monitoring of the situation.

Should a student miss 10 contact points without authorisation, the school will review the situation with the default outcome being that the school will cease sponsorship and report the absence to the UKVI at this stage. In such cases, UKVI are likely to curtail the student's permission to stay in the UK and the student will have to return to their home country.

Part-time Timetables

All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable is not used to manage a student's behaviour. Part time timetables will be documented and reviewed regularly and agreed with the student and parents.

The School Teaching Day

School starts with tutor group registration at 8.45 a.m. and teaching concludes at 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Where required due to timetable constraints, a student's school day may be extended.

Appendix 1

Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration.

If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed. Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be recorded as absent. This should

be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. If a pupil is recorded with code N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed, the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending.

Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead.

Schools must also record the nature of the provision (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision.

Schools should ensure that arrangements are in place whereby the education provider notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

If the pupil does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code P: Participating in a sporting activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. The final decision on approving the activity, however, rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code W: Attending work experience

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is

registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;

- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

- the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;
- the activity is of an educational nature;
- the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and
- the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's

attendance has been approved. Supervision means the pupil is physically supervised by someone who meets this definition.

Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

- attending transition days at other schools;
- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Absent - leave of absence

All schools must use the following codes to record the reason for a pupil being absent with leave:

Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only do so in the following circumstances (under regulation 11(2)):

- Where the local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.
- Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, including where a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the pupil has been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place or the Secretary of State.
- Where a Justice of the Peace has given the pupil a licence to go abroad for a

performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where a local authority licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a pupil who is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad under a licence or exemption as described above.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours.

Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant leave of absence for this under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence), and the school is satisfied that, based on the individual facts of the case, there are exceptional circumstances which justify the leave.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(4), where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment.

This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(5), for a pupil to study for a public examination where the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(7) or (8) for a pupil not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to

attend.

Where the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Under compulsory school age

In cases where a parent wishes their child to begin school on a part-time basis in line with the school admissions code, schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence for sessions the pupil is not expected to attend. This must be agreed between the school and the parent they normally live with and must end at the point at which the pupil reaches compulsory school age. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed by the school and the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with.

Over compulsory school age

Where a sixth form pupil's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with or the pupil.

Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs in line with paragraphs 65-70.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(6) to temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because they are subject to a part-time timetable

in line with an agreement between the school and a parent the pupil normally lives with that the pupil should temporarily be educated part-time.

Where a pupil is receiving a full-time education, but only part-time at the school in question (e.g. dual registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexi schooling) this code must not be used and the appropriate code for why the pupil is not in school for that session should be used.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance to avoid double counting.

Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence should not, and from a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority, must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant such a leave of absence under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure

and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record where a pupil is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Pregnant pupils

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific facts and circumstances of each case. Ultimately, it is at the school's discretion how much leave to grant.

Absent - other authorised reasons

Relevant regulation 10(4) Table 3

Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

Schools should not unnecessarily ask for proof that the parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.

To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.