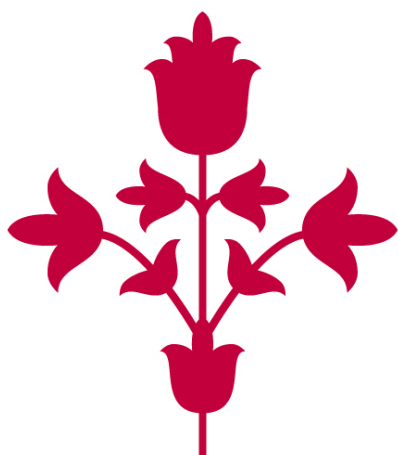




Earlscliffe



STATUTORY SCHOOL POLICY • 2026–27

Attendance and Absence Policy

A clear, supportive framework for regular attendance, punctuality, safeguarding and educational engagement.

Headteacher	Dr N Robinson
Deputy Headteacher	Mr L Connolly
Effective	Sept 1, 2026



Document control

Policy title	Attendance and Absence Policy
School	Earlscliffe
Policy owner / Senior Attendance Champion	Mr L Connolly, Deputy Headteacher and DSL
Accountable leader	Dr N Robinson, Headteacher
Approval authority	Governing Body
Version	1 National College-aligned draft for governance approval
Prepared	Aug 24, 2026
Effective from	Sept 1, 2026
Next formal review	Before Sept 1, 2027 or earlier following legal, regulatory or material operational change
Applies to	All pupils, including day pupils, boarders and sixth-form pupils; all staff responsible for attendance, supervision, welfare, registers or pupil records.
Day-to-day contact	School Reception — reception@earlscliffe.co.uk
Detailed attendance support	Mr L Connolly, Deputy Headteacher and DSL - via School Reception
	2026 STATUTORY UPDATE This edition reflects the July 2026 Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance, the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, September 2025 children-missing-education guidance, KCSIE 2026 and June 2026 Student Sponsor guidance. It is tailored to Earlscliffe as an independent international day-and-boarding school.

Approval and review record

Control	Record
Approved by	Dr N Robinson - Headteacher
Approval date	01 Sept 2026
Review completed by	Mr L Connolly
Date of next review	Before Sept 1, 2027

Changes in this edition

- Rebuilds the policy in the Earlscliffe 2026–27 policy template and aligns responsibility to Dr N Robinson as Headteacher and Mr L Connolly as the sole Deputy Headteacher, DSL and Senior Attendance Champion.
- Adapts the National College model without importing template instructions or maintained-school-only procedures.
- Updates the legal title and requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the July 2026 attendance guidance.
- Clarifies common registration times, register-closing times, same-day follow-up, five-school-day clearance of Code N and electronic audit-trail requirements.
- Adds current local-authority new-pupil, deletion, attendance and sickness-return requirements and stronger children-missing-education controls.
- Makes the independent-school position explicit: Earlscliffe does not issue penalty notices or use statutory school attendance contracts, but cooperates with the local authority and may use proportionate contractual measures under the Parent Contract.
- Strengthens support for pupils with SEND, disabilities, health or mental-health needs, young carers, children with social workers and those at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- Integrates iSAMS academic attendance, Orah boarding whereabouts, missing-pupil response and current UKVI sponsorship duties.
- Adds the full 2024 national code set, including administrative Codes # and Z, and corrects the former reference to 'Student Registration' regulations.

Attendance at a glance

IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING RULE

Every unexpected or unexplained absence is followed up on the day it occurs. If a pupil's whereabouts or welfare cannot be confirmed, staff escalate immediately to the Senior Attendance Champion/DSL and follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection and Missing Student procedures. No attendance threshold must be reached before safeguarding action is taken.

When	Required action	Owner
Before 8:25am where possible; no later than 9:00am	Parent/guardian reports an unexpected day-pupil absence to Reception, gives the reason and expected return date; daily updates continue until return.	Parent / guardian
8:25am	Morning registration in iSAMS; a pupil absent when the register is taken is marked with the best information available.	Group Tutor
8:35am	Morning register closes. Arrival after 8:25am but by 8:35am is Code L; arrival after closure is Code U or another more appropriate absence code.	Reception / tutor
After 8:35am	Reception reconciles notices, iSAMS, boarding/medical information and begins first-day contact and safeguarding checks for every unexplained absence.	Reception
Each lesson	The teacher completes the lesson register and reports an unexpected internal absence immediately.	Teacher
2:15pm	Afternoon registration is taken at the same time for all pupils.	Designated staff

When	Required action	Owner
2:20pm	Afternoon register closes; unexplained absence is followed up without delay.	Reception / tutor
Within 5 school days	Any unresolved Code N is replaced with the established code or Code O.	Reception

School expectations

- The shared ambition is 100% attendance and punctuality; every pupil is expected to attend every required session for its full duration.
- Earlscliffe's operational attendance expectation is at least 95%; falling below this prompts review and support, not an automatic sanction.
- Persistent absence means missing 10% or more sessions; severe absence means missing 50% or more sessions. Both include authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Parents should not book term-time holidays or travel until written leave has been granted. Leisure or recreation will not normally be exceptional circumstances.
- Remote education does not convert absence into attendance; the appropriate national absence code remains required.

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1. Statement of intent, purpose and scope

Regular attendance is essential to learning, relationships, wellbeing, personal development and future opportunity. For vulnerable pupils it is also a protective factor: repeated, prolonged or unexplained absence may be a sign that a child needs help or protection. Earlscliffe therefore treats attendance as everybody's responsibility and seeks to make school calm, safe, inclusive and somewhere pupils want to be.

The school expects pupils to attend every scheduled lesson, registration period, examination, tutorial and required school activity unless the absence is authorised or another national code properly applies. This policy covers statutory registration, lesson attendance, boarding whereabouts and the school's work with pupils, parents, guardians, local authorities, safeguarding partners and UKVI.

Core principles

- Expect high attendance for every pupil while recognising that barriers are individual and sometimes complex.
- Monitor accurately and identify emerging patterns early at pupil, lesson, cohort and whole-school level.
- Listen to pupils and families, understand barriers and agree proportionate support and reasonable adjustments.
- Formalise support when voluntary arrangements are ineffective or not engaged with, while continuing to offer help.
- Act immediately where absence or a missing pupil raises a safeguarding concern.
- Apply the policy fairly and consistently without treating materially different circumstances as identical.
- Distinguish statutory attendance records, lesson registers, Orah boarding records and UKVI contact monitoring; each has a separate purpose.

2. Legal and regulatory framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation, standards and guidance, as applicable to an independent school in England:

- Education Act 1996, including parents' duties concerning suitable full-time education and local-authority attendance and children-missing-education functions.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including safeguarding, welfare and leadership requirements.
- Children Acts 1989 and 2004; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026; and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance, July 2026; Children Missing Education, September 2025; and relevant health-needs, medical-conditions and remote-education guidance.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils; Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice where relevant.
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, updated May 2026.
- UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.
- Home Office Student Sponsor guidance, including Sponsorship Duties, version 06/2026.

INDEPENDENT-SCHOOL APPLICATION

The July 2026 DfE guidance applies to independent schools in Chapters 1 and 2 through the Independent School Standards and sets important expectations for attendance culture, registers, support and safeguarding. Maintained-school-only powers and processes are not presented as Earlscliffe powers.

Related Earlscliffe documents

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Children Missing Education/Missing Student arrangements; Behaviour Policy; Suspension and Exclusion Policy; SEND and learning-support arrangements; medical and mental-health procedures; Statement of Boarding Principles and Practice; Supervision arrangements; Educational Visits Policy; Data Protection Policy and privacy notices; Admissions Policy; Parent Contract; and complaints procedure.

3. Definitions and attendance standards

Term	Meaning
Attendance	Being physically present at the school or attending an approved place/activity that meets the legal criteria and is recorded with the correct national code.
Absence	Not attending a session the pupil is required to attend, including late arrival after the register has closed.
Authorised absence	Absence for which an authorised national code applies. Parent notification alone does not authorise absence.
Unauthorised absence	Absence recorded with Code G, N, O or U, subject to later amendment where the reason is established.
Persistent absence	Missing 10% or more of possible sessions for any reason; approximately one day per fortnight over a full year.
Severe absence	Missing 50% or more of possible sessions for any reason.
Children missing education (CME)	Children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. A registered pupil who is persistently or severely absent is not, by that fact alone, CME.
Parent	A natural parent, a person with parental responsibility, or a person with day-to-day care. An educational guardian or agent does not replace the parent unless legally or contractually authorised.
Compulsory school age	The period defined by education law. Pupils above compulsory school age remain subject to Earlscliffe's attendance, contractual, safeguarding and, where applicable, sponsorship expectations.

Earlscliffe aspires to 100% attendance and punctuality and expects at least 95%. Percentages are indicators, not substitutes for professional judgement: a rapid decline, repeated same-day absence, lesson-specific avoidance, unexplained absence or a known vulnerability may require action before 95% is reached.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body and proprietor

- Approve the policy and hold leaders to account for accurate registers, safeguarding and effective support.
- Review recent and historic attendance trends, including persistent/severe absence, punctuality, key cohorts and the impact of action.
- Ensure sufficient resourcing, staff induction and role-specific attendance training.
- Provide support and challenge without receiving unnecessary identifiable pupil information.

Headteacher - Dr N Robinson

- Remain accountable for implementation, lawful register arrangements and reports to governors.
- Decide requests for exceptional leave of absence; may authorise the Deputy Headteacher to manage routine administration while retaining accountability.
- Ensure local-authority, safeguarding, regulatory and sponsorship duties are met and that contractual action is fair and proportionate.

Senior Attendance Champion, Deputy Headteacher and DSL - Mr L Connolly

- Set the attendance vision, systems and priorities and ensure they are followed consistently.
- Oversee daily escalation, data analysis, early support, persistent/severe absence and the effectiveness of interventions.
- Coordinate attendance, safeguarding, SEND, health, boarding and external-agency work.
- Ensure unexplained, repeated or prolonged absence is considered as a potential safeguarding indicator and escalated without delay.
- Advise the Headteacher on leave applications and report termly to governors.

School Reception - attendance administration

- Receive absence notices, reconcile iSAMS with boarding, medical and activity information, and make first-day contact.
- Maintain accurate codes and the register amendment audit trail; clear Code N within five school days.
- Escalate unconfirmed whereabouts, concerning patterns and overdue information immediately.
- Support statutory returns and secure attendance records.

Tutors, teachers and boarding staff

- Take registers punctually and accurately; never pre-populate attendance or assume a pupil is elsewhere.
- Report unexplained lesson or activity absence immediately and follow safeguarding instructions.
- Know pupils, identify patterns or barriers, listen sensitively and pass concerns to the Senior Attendance Champion/DSL.
- Boarding staff maintain Orah roll calls, sign-out/leave records and prompt handover to the academic team; they do not treat a boarding roll call as an academic attendance mark.

Parents, guardians and pupils

- Parents ensure a child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education and, when registered at school, attends regularly; all families also meet the Parent Contract.
- Parents keep contact details and more than one emergency contact current; report absence accurately and promptly; engage with support; arrange appointments outside school where possible; and request leave in advance.
- Parents tell the school in writing about a proposed move or withdrawal and provide the future address and education arrangements; they must not assume the pupil can be removed from roll immediately.
- Pupils attend punctually, remain on site unless authorised, follow sign-out/exit arrangements, explain concerns early and engage with agreed support.

5. School day, registers and punctuality

Control	Earlscliffe arrangement
School day	Morning registration begins at 8:25am; the normal academic day ends at 4:00pm. Required activities may extend beyond these times.
AM statutory/operational register	Taken at 8:25am at the same time for all registered pupils; closes at 8:35am.
PM statutory/operational register	Taken at 2:15pm at the same time for all registered pupils; closes at 2:20pm.
Lesson registers	Taken at the beginning of every lesson to identify internal absence and support safeguarding.
Late before closure	Code L; actual arrival time and reason are recorded.
Late after closure	Code U unless another national absence code more accurately describes the reason.
Systems	iSAMS for academic/session attendance; Orah for boarding whereabouts, roll calls, sign-out and leave.

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 do not require a statutory attendance-register mark for a pupil who is a boarder. Earlscliffe nevertheless records academic session and lesson attendance for all pupils in iSAMS as a consistent educational, operational and safeguarding control and applies national codes where appropriate. Orah is a separate residential record; neither system replaces the other.

Register controls

- The admission and attendance registers are electronic. Entries use the prescribed national codes and the primary reason for absence.
- A register remains open only for the published period and never for more than 30 minutes.
- If the reason is not known when the register closes, Code N is used temporarily. It is changed as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session; otherwise it becomes Code O.
- Every amendment preserves the original entry, revised entry, reason, date and identity of the person making the change.
- Entries are preserved for six years from the date of entry. A pupil remains recorded until lawful deletion from the admission register.
- If iSAMS is unavailable, staff send a secure contemporaneous register to Reception for entry and reconciliation when service resumes.

6. Reporting and following up absence

Parent/guardian notification

For an unexpected absence, a day pupil's parent/guardian must email reception@earlscliffe.co.uk or telephone the school as soon as possible and no later than 9:00am on the first day. The message must state the reason, likely duration, where the pupil is and a contact number. The family provides a daily update until the pupil returns unless a longer period has been agreed. For a boarder, boarding or medical staff notify Reception before morning registration and maintain contact with parents/guardians as appropriate.

School follow-up

- After the morning register closes, Reception checks notifications, iSAMS, Orah, the medical room, trips, appointments and known timetable changes.
- For any unexplained absence, Reception contacts parents/guardians and, for a boarder, boarding staff immediately. The order and urgency reflect known risk and vulnerability.
- If contact fails, staff try every current emergency contact and other proportionate routes. A message alone is not confirmation that the pupil is safe.
- Where whereabouts or safety cannot be confirmed, the Senior Attendance Champion/DSL decides immediate safeguarding action, including searches, welfare checks, children's social care or police contact.
- The school records calls, messages, information obtained, decisions, risk assessment, referrals and the final code.

SENSITIVE REASONS

Staff ask only for information needed to understand attendance, safeguard the pupil and select the correct code. Health, family, immigration or safeguarding information is handled sensitively and shared on a need-to-know basis.

7. Authorising absence and term-time leave

Parent notification does not itself authorise absence. The Headteacher decides whether leave is granted and the appropriate code, considering each request on its individual merits. No category of discretionary leave is granted automatically or through a blanket rule.

Advance requests

- Requests are made in writing to Reception as early as possible and normally at least two weeks before discretionary leave; appointments should be notified at least 48 hours ahead where practicable.
- The request gives dates, purpose, travel implications and supporting information. Travel must not be booked until written approval is received.
- Where leave is granted, the Headteacher decides the authorised period. Absence beyond it is not automatically authorised.
- Family holidays and leisure/recreation during term time will not normally constitute exceptional circumstances.
- Significant unavoidable international travel disruption, visa/immigration events or geopolitical events may be considered individually where evidence is provided; families must still plan travel to protect term-time attendance.
- Religious observance, regulated performance/employment, interviews, public-examination study leave, medical/dental appointments and exceptional circumstances are recorded only where the relevant code criteria are met.

Illness and appointments

Illness is normally Code I. Medical or dental appointments for which leave has been granted are Code M. If a pupil is present at registration and later leaves during the session for an appointment, the statutory session mark is not changed, but lesson-level absence and sign-out are recorded. Appointments should be outside school where possible and the pupil should miss only the necessary time.

Unauthorised holiday is Code G. Other unauthorised absence is Code O once the reason is known or cannot be established. Late arrival after register closure is Code U unless another code more accurately reflects the primary reason.

8. Illness, health, SEND, disability and young carers

The attendance ambition remains high for pupils with physical or mental-health conditions, SEND or disabilities, but additional support and reasonable adjustments may be necessary. Staff do not diagnose or treat conditions; they work with the pupil, family, school professionals and external agencies to understand barriers and enable the greatest safe attendance.

- Accept parent notification of ordinary illness in most cases. Medical evidence is not requested routinely or through a blanket rule.
- Seek reasonable evidence only where there is genuine doubt, prolonged or recurring illness, or a need to understand complex needs and suitable provision; remain flexible about the form of evidence.
- Consider adjustments to routines, uniform, transport, learning environment, lunchtime, timetable access, communication and reintegration; record and review formal Equality Act adjustments.
- Work with the SENCO/learning-support and pastoral teams and, for an EHC plan, the local authority where attendance barriers indicate provision or the plan may need review.
- Use any phased return or temporary part-time timetable only when exceptional, time-limited, agreed, reviewed and directed towards full-time attendance.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority where Code I is used and there are reasonable grounds to believe a compulsory-school-age pupil will miss at least 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively in the school year.
- Identify and support young carers; absence linked to caring responsibilities is not normalised or ignored and may require family help or a young carer's needs assessment through the local authority.

REMOTE EDUCATION

Remote education is a last resort after reasonable adjustments have been considered and should form part of a wider return-to-school plan. A pupil receiving remote education while absent remains marked absent with the appropriate national code; engagement is monitored separately.

9. Truancy, internal absence, missing pupils and boarding

A pupil who was present but is unexpectedly absent from a later lesson, registration, required activity or boarding check is treated first as a whereabouts and safeguarding issue. Staff do not wait until the end of the lesson or school day.

Step	Action
1. Verify	Check the live lesson/session register, authorised movement, medical room, known meeting/activity, trip list and Orah where relevant.
2. Alert	Tell Reception and the Senior Attendance Champion/DSL immediately; for a boarder alert the boarding lead.
3. Locate	Undertake a proportionate, coordinated search and contact the pupil without exposing sensitive information or compromising safety.
4. Escalate	If not promptly located or risk is elevated, activate the Missing Student procedure; contact parents/guardians and police or other agencies as directed by the DSL/senior leader.
5. Record/review	Record times, checks, decisions and outcome; consider safeguarding, bullying, exploitation, mental health, SEND, behaviour and attendance support.

Boarding staff complete structured Orah roll calls and maintain sign-out, exeat, leave, supervision and welfare records. Any discrepancy is followed up immediately. Academic and boarding staff reconcile information at handover. Behaviour consequences may follow deliberate truancy or unauthorised departure, but only after safety, welfare, reasonable adjustments and the reason for absence have been considered.

10. Part-time timetables, off-site provision and remote education

10. Part-time timetables, off-site provision and remote education

Earlscliffe is committed to providing all pupils with a full and appropriate programme of education. Given the nature of the School, its pastoral provision and the support available to pupils, the use of part-time timetables, flexi-schooling or alternative off-site education is **highly unusual and would only be considered in exceptional circumstances**. Where any such arrangement is necessary, it will be carefully planned, time-limited and subject to regular senior review.

Temporary part-time timetables

Pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to receive full-time education. A temporary reduced or part-time timetable would therefore only be used in **exceptional circumstances**, where this is considered to be in the individual pupil's best interests and where a full-time timetable is not, for a short period, appropriate or reasonably practicable.

A reduced timetable will never be used as a behaviour sanction, as a means of managing challenging behaviour, or as a long-term substitute for appropriate educational, pastoral or SEND provision.

Any such arrangement must be approved by the **Headteacher**, following consultation as appropriate with the pupil, their parents or carers, the Senior Attendance Champion, DSL and any relevant SEND, medical or external professionals.

A written plan will be agreed which sets out:

- the exceptional reasons for the arrangement;
- the education and sessions the pupil will receive;
- attendance and safeguarding arrangements;
- any transport or supervision requirements;
- how the pupil's welfare and educational progress will be monitored;
- regular review dates;
- a clearly defined end date; and
- a planned pathway for the pupil to return to full-time education as soon as reasonably possible.

The arrangement will be reviewed regularly and will continue only for as long as it remains demonstrably in the pupil's best interests.

Attendance will be recorded in accordance with the current statutory attendance regulations and Department for Education guidance. Where a pupil is not required to attend a session under an agreed temporary part-time timetable, the appropriate national attendance code will be used. If the pupil fails to attend a session that they are expected to attend, the appropriate absence code will instead be recorded.

Off-site education and approved educational activities

The use of off-site educational provision is also **unusual at Earlscliffe** and would normally arise only where there is a specific educational, pastoral, medical or SEND-related reason for doing so.

Where a pupil is educated or participating in an approved activity away from the School site, Earlscliffe will ensure that the arrangement meets the relevant statutory requirements, including appropriate approval, supervision, safeguarding and attendance-monitoring arrangements.

Attendance codes, including Codes **B, K, P, V or W**, will only be used where the precise criteria set out in current national guidance are satisfied.

The School will maintain a reliable and timely system for confirming that the pupil has attended the alternative provision or activity. Any failure to attend will be followed up promptly on the same day in accordance with the School's safeguarding and attendance procedures, and the attendance register will be amended where necessary to reflect the correct absence code.

Dual registration and flexi-schooling

Dual registration would only arise where a pupil is formally registered at another school or educational setting in addition to Earlscliffe. Code **D** will only be used where the statutory criteria for dual registration are met and the pupil is scheduled to attend the other registered school for that session.

Flexi-schooling is not part of Earlscliffe's normal educational model and would be highly unlikely to be agreed. Any request for flexi-schooling would be considered individually by the Headteacher, taking account of the pupil's educational needs, welfare, safeguarding, attendance and the School's ability to deliver an appropriate education.

Parents do not have an automatic right to flexi-schooling and **Earlscliffe is under no obligation to agree such an arrangement.**

Where exceptionally agreed, flexi-schooling will be clearly distinguished from a temporary part-time timetable and attendance will be recorded using the codes required by current statutory guidance.

Remote education

Earlscliffe is fundamentally an **in-person educational community**, and remote education is not intended to replace normal attendance at School.

Remote education may exceptionally be provided for a limited period where a pupil is unable to attend the School site but is able to continue learning, or where temporary circumstances make face-to-face education impracticable. Any such provision will be determined by the School according to the individual circumstances and will be reviewed regularly.

The provision of remote education does not in itself change the School's statutory attendance responsibilities, and attendance will continue to be recorded in accordance with current regulations and guidance.

11. Attendance support and intervention

The school's response follows the sequence: expect, monitor, listen and understand, facilitate support, formalise support and, only where appropriate, refer for enforcement. Support intensifies as absence becomes more entrenched, but safeguarding escalation may be immediate.

Trigger	Typical response
Unexpected or unexplained absence	Same-day contact, whereabouts checks, code correction and safeguarding assessment.
Emerging pattern or attendance below 95%	Tutor/pastoral conversation; analyse days, lessons, codes and pupil voice; contact family; remove in-school barriers; agree actions.
Rapid decline or risk of persistent absence	Senior Attendance Champion review; formal meeting; attendance support plan; SEND/health/boarding assessment; consider early help and local-authority support.
Persistent absence — 10% or more sessions missed	Regular reviewed plan with pupil and parents; coordinated multi-agency support; statutory returns/referrals where required; governor oversight through anonymised reporting.
Severe absence — 50% or more sessions missed	Top-priority safeguarding and attendance response; intensive joint work with the local authority and relevant partners; consider whether neglect or other harm is indicated.
Deliberate non-engagement after suitable support	Explain consequences; consider a school attendance agreement, Parent Contract measures and referral to the local authority. Continue safeguarding and reasonable-adjustment duties.

Attendance support plan

A plan identifies the pupil's strengths and voice; barriers inside and outside school; agreed adjustments and support; attendance goal and required sessions; named leads; family, guardian and boarding actions; external services; communication method; review date; evidence of impact; and escalation criteria. Goals are ambitious, realistic and not used to deny authorised absence or required adjustments.

12. Persistent and severe absence

Persistent and severe absence include authorised and unauthorised absence. The school looks beyond the headline percentage to frequency, duration, reasons, vulnerable cohorts, lesson-level patterns, boarding information and the pupil's lived experience.

- Meet the pupil and parents to understand barriers; keep the best-placed trusted adult consistent where possible.
- Involve the SENCO/learning-support, medical, mental-health, boarding and safeguarding teams as relevant.
- Inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker of unexplained absence and coordinate with the virtual school where appropriate.
- Consider early help/family help, health, transport, mentoring, academic catch-up, careers support, alternative provision or an EHC needs assessment/review where relevant.
- Review support regularly and change it when it is not working; refusal or initial failure of one offer does not end the duty to seek a workable response.
- Where severe unauthorised absence continues after appropriate provision and support, consider whether this indicates neglect and refer to children's social care where the safeguarding threshold is met.

SAFEGUARDING INDICATOR

KCSIE 2026 identifies unexplainable and/or persistent absence and frequent missing episodes as potential indicators of harm. Repeated or prolonged absence can signal neglect, child sexual or criminal exploitation, county lines, trafficking, forced marriage, mental-health need or another safeguarding concern. Staff report concerns immediately to the DSL.

13. Contractual and local-authority action

Earlscliffe seeks to secure attendance through respectful partnership and appropriate support. Where support is not appropriate, has not succeeded or is not engaged with, the school may use a written school attendance agreement and proportionate action under the Parent Contract and Behaviour Policy. A school attendance agreement is supportive and is not the statutory attendance contract used in the maintained sector.

PENALTY NOTICES AND STATUTORY CONTRACTS

Independent schools are excluded from the school use of the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the statutory school attendance-contract process described in the July 2026 DfE guidance. Earlscliffe does not issue penalty notices. The school makes required returns and may refer concerns to the relevant local authority; the authority decides whether any legal or statutory intervention is available and appropriate. Contractual action by Earlscliffe remains separate.

No pupil is sanctioned simply for illness, disability, SEND, mental-health need, unavoidable cause or another authorised reason. Where deliberate truancy, dishonesty or refusal is established, any behaviour response is proportionate and accompanies, rather than replaces, support and safeguarding.

14. Admission register, local-authority returns and children missing education

Admission register

- Enter every pupil on the electronic admission register on the agreed starting day and follow up any failure to attend that day; notify the local authority if the pupil cannot be located.
- Keep all prescribed pupil, parent, contact, address, previous-school, starting-date and day/boarding status information current.
- Make a New Pupil Return to the local authority within five days of addition, supplying the required information.
- Delete a name only when a ground in Regulation 9 of the 2024 Regulations is fully met; make the required Deletion Return. Never remove a pupil for convenience, poor attendance or before lawful conditions are met.
- Delete from admission and attendance registers at the same time; never backdate deletion; continue recording attendance up to the deletion date.
- For transfer, confirm entry on the receiving school's register and transfer the common transfer file securely. Support joint reasonable enquiries with the local authority where a pupil does not return after leave or has prolonged unexplained absence.

Attendance and sickness returns

Return / access	Requirement
Attendance return	At the frequency agreed with the local authority and at least monthly, provide names and addresses of compulsory-school-age pupils who fail to attend regularly or have ten continuous school days recorded with one or more of Codes G, N, O and/or U.
Sickness return	Provide name and address where Code I applies and there are reasonable grounds to believe at least 15 school days will be missed consecutively or cumulatively in the school year. Only one return is required for one continuous period.
Register access	Authorised local-authority officers may inspect and take extracts from admission and attendance registers for Education Act functions.
Safeguarding	Share earlier and more urgently where necessary and lawful to safeguard a child; statutory minimum reporting points never delay a referral.

Children missing education

A registered pupil remains on roll while lawful enquiries and support continue. If a Regulation 9 deletion ground is met after required enquiries, the school supplies the deletion information and cooperates with the local authority so it can decide whether the child is CME and secure suitable education. An overseas move, parent assertion of home education or contractual withdrawal does not by itself authorise premature deletion.

15. Sponsored international pupils

Attendance and engagement are also monitored for pupils sponsored under the Student or Child Student routes. Authorised compliance staff maintain the school's documented expected-contact system, enrolment evidence, contact details, attendance history, reasons for absence and intervention record in accordance with current Home Office guidance.

- Academic or pastoral activities may be defined as expected contact points. The school's documented system, rather than an assumed register mark alone, determines the relevant UKVI sequence.
- An unexplained missed contact is followed up immediately under attendance and safeguarding procedures; visa compliance never delays action to locate or protect a child.
- Where a non-higher-education sponsor's pupil misses ten consecutive expected contact points without permission, authorised staff apply the current sponsorship rules, including reporting/withdrawal decisions and applicable reporting timescales.
- Non-enrolment, deferral, withdrawal, change of circumstances or cessation of sponsorship is reported where current guidance requires.
- Parents, guardians and pupils are told that sustained non-engagement may affect sponsorship, but decisions are individual, evidenced and made by authorised compliance staff.

16. Data analysis, governance, training and records

Monitoring and analysis

- Reception and pastoral staff review daily unexplained absence, lateness and missing lesson marks; the Senior Attendance Champion reviews weekly individual and cohort patterns.
- Half-termly, termly and annual analysis covers overall, authorised/unauthorised, persistent/severe absence, punctuality, codes, days, lessons, year groups, exam cohorts and trends over time.
- Context-relevant cohorts include SEND/disability, long-term health needs, social worker or looked-after status, young carers, boarders/day pupils, sponsored international pupils and groups facing identified barriers or disparities.
- Benchmarking uses appropriate local, regional, national and comparable-school information, recognising Earlscliffe's independent international day-and-boarding profile.
- The Senior Attendance Champion evaluates intervention impact and reports termly to the Headteacher and Governing Body with actions, without unnecessary personal data.

Training

All staff receive induction and refresher training on the importance of attendance, accurate and timely registers, national codes relevant to their role, first-day response, internal truancy, safeguarding indicators, information sharing and escalation. Reception, tutors, boarding staff, data staff and the Senior Attendance Champion receive role-specific training, including data interpretation and 2026 register requirements.

Data protection and records

Attendance data is processed under the school's privacy notices and data-protection framework. Access is role-based; information is accurate, relevant, proportionate and shared lawfully with parents, local authorities, safeguarding partners, receiving schools and UKVI where required. Attendance records, contact logs, support plans, evidence, decisions and amendments are retained under the school's retention schedule; the statutory register entries are preserved for six years.

17. Publication, monitoring and review

The policy is published on the school website, provided with joining information and brought to the attention of pupils, parents, guardians and staff at least annually and when materially updated. An accessible format is available on request. Operational procedures and contact routes are reinforced through induction, staff training, pupil briefings and boarding handovers.

The Senior Attendance Champion monitors implementation throughout the year. The Headteacher and Governing Body review the policy at least annually and earlier after a material incident, significant trend, complaint, inspection finding or change in legislation, guidance, systems, leadership or school operations. Pupil and parent views are considered when the policy is reviewed.

Appendix A. National attendance and absence codes

The current national codes under Regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 are summarised below. Staff select codes by reference to the Regulations and the July 2026 DfE guidance; this table does not replace the full legal criteria.

Attending the school

Code	Meaning / use
/	Present at the school for the morning session.
\	Present at the school for the afternoon session.
L	Arrived after the register began but before it closed; arrival time and reason recorded.

Attending an approved place or activity

Code	Meaning / use
B	Attending another approved educational activity meeting the applicable supervision and approval criteria.
J1	Leave granted to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority.
P	Participating in an approved, supervised sporting activity.
V	Attending an educational visit or trip.
W	Attending work experience.

Authorised absence

Code	Meaning / use
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances not covered by another leave code.
C1	Leave for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave for a compulsory-school-age pupil subject to an agreed temporary part-time timetable.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision made for the session.
I	Unable to attend because of illness, not a medical or dental appointment.
M	Leave for a medical or dental appointment.
R	Religious observance on a day set apart by the relevant religious body.
S	Leave to study for a public examination.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes where the statutory criteria are met.

Unauthorised absence

Code	Meaning / use
G	Holiday not granted by the school.
N	Reason not yet established; temporary only and changed within five school days.
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances; includes unresolved Code N after five school days.
U	Arrived after registration closed, unless another absence code is more appropriate.

Not a possible attendance session

Code	Meaning / use
D	Dual registered at another school and scheduled to attend there.
Q	Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements, where the detailed criteria are met.
X	Non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend for the session.
Y1	Unable to attend because normally provided transport is unavailable.
Y2	Unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel.
Y3	Unable to attend because part of the school premises is closed.
Y4	Unable to attend because the whole school site is unexpectedly closed.
Y5	Unable to attend because the pupil is in criminal justice detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public-health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend because of another unavoidable cause meeting the detailed criteria.

Administrative codes

Code	Meaning / use
#	Planned whole-school closure.
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on the admission register; not an attendance code for a registered pupil.

CODE DISCIPLINE

Code N is never left indefinitely; Code O is not a holding code where the reason is still being sought before the five-day limit; Code U applies only after the published register closes; and remote learning is recorded separately from the national attendance mark.

Appendix B. Daily attendance operating procedure

Time / event	Reception / attendance action	Escalation / evidence
Before 8:25am	Check voicemail/email and known absences; reconcile boarder, medical, trip and appointment information.	Record source, time, reason and expected return.
8:25–8:35am	Monitor missing marks and contact tutors where register is incomplete.	Escalate repeated staff non-completion to the Senior Attendance Champion.
After 8:35am	Generate unexplained-absence list; begin contact in risk order; check all systems and emergency contacts.	Escalate immediately where whereabouts/welfare are not confirmed.
During lessons	Receive unexpected-absence alerts; verify authorised movements and locate pupil.	Activate Missing Student procedure where required.
2:15–2:20pm	Repeat register-quality and unexplained-absence checks for PM session.	Same-day safeguarding response; do not defer to next morning.
End of day	Confirm all N marks actively pursued, actions logged and safeguarding handovers completed.	Unresolved N remains on active daily follow-up list.
Within 5 school days	Replace N with established code or O; preserve amendment audit trail.	Senior Attendance Champion samples compliance.
Weekly	Produce pupil/cohort/punctuality report and identify below-95%, rapid decline and patterns.	Assign action, owner and review date.

Minimum first-day contact record

- Pupil; date/session; expected location; vulnerability/risk information considered.
- Register mark and time; information checked in iSAMS, Orah, medical, visits and authorised-movement records.
- Every telephone number/contact tried, time, method, response and identity verified.
- Reason for absence, likely duration, current location and responsible adult.
- Safeguarding decision, consultation with DSL/senior leader, search, referral or welfare check.
- Final code, amendment details and next action/review.

Appendix C. Attendance support plan and review record

Pupil / year	_____
Plan lead	_____
Start / review / end dates	_____
Current attendance / pattern	_____
Pupil voice and strengths	_____
Barriers identified	_____
Safeguarding / SEND / health / boarding considerations	_____
Reasonable adjustments	_____
School actions and owner	_____
Pupil / parent / guardian actions	_____
External services / consent or lawful basis	_____
Required sessions / measurable goal	_____
Daily contact and escalation route	_____
Evidence reviewed	_____
Outcome / next step	_____

Review principles

- The plan is developed with the pupil and parents and is accessible in language and format.
- Support is specific, owned, dated and reviewed for impact rather than merely completed.
- Attendance goals do not override authorised absence, medical need, disability adjustments or safeguarding.
- Where progress is limited, the team revisits the barrier analysis and changes support before concluding that engagement has failed.
- A copy is provided to relevant participants and stored securely; sensitive information is limited to need-to-know recipients.

Appendix D. Source register and pre-approval checklist

Principal sources

Source	Edition / relevance
DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance	July 2026 statutory guidance; independent-school expectations, registers, support, data and codes.
School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024	Admission/attendance registers, codes, amendments, retention, returns and deletion grounds.
DfE Children Missing Education	September 2025 statutory guidance; school/local-authority responsibilities and joint reasonable enquiries.
Keeping Children Safe in Education	2026 edition in force 1 Sept 2026; safeguarding response to repeated/prolonged absence.
Working Together to Safeguard Children	2026 statutory multi-agency framework.
National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools	Updated May 2026; boarder welfare, supervision and records.
Home Office Student Sponsor Guidance — Sponsorship Duties	Version 06/2026; enrolment, expected contact points and sponsorship reporting.
The National College Secondary Attendance and Absence Policy	Model published/reviewed for legislation and guidance in force on 1 Sept 2025; adapted, not adopted verbatim.
Earlscliffe Attendance Policy	Current version 02/2026; operational times, iSAMS/Orah, 95% expectation, absence route and international/boarding context retained and corrected.

Governance pre-approval checklist

- Confirm 8:25am/8:35am and 2:15pm/2:20pm registration and closure times remain correct for the 2026–27 timetable.
- Confirm reception@earlscliffe.co.uk and published telephone routes are current and monitored before 9:00am.
- Confirm iSAMS and Orah names, access, outage procedures, role permissions and six-year register retention settings.
- Confirm Mr L Connolly is the published Senior Attendance Champion and that Reception is the day-to-day attendance contact.
- Confirm Kent/local-authority return routes, named liaison point and monthly reporting process.
- Confirm the school's UKVI expected-contact and reporting procedure with the Authorising Officer/Key Contact and sponsor compliance records.
- Cross-check terminology and links against the final 2026–27 Safeguarding, CME/Missing Student, SEND, Behaviour, Boarding, Admissions and Parent Contract documents.
- Complete equality, accessibility, data-protection and staff-consultation checks; approve and publish the final version.