



Attendance Policy

Rationale

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing or frequently absent from education in their area. Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children are safe and receiving suitable education.

A child going missing or frequently absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Pupils with the highest rates of attendance tend to also have the highest rates of attainment. At KS4 pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and Maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, twice as high as those achieving grades 9 to 4 (Working together to improve school attendance September 2024).

Those children at risk of becoming absent from education are those who:

- Are frequently missing/go missing from school, home or care.
- Have experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from school
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- Have a family member/carer in prison/custody or is affected by parental/carer offending.

In such incidences of repeated absence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect. Therefore, it is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM, County Lines, radicalisation and forced marriage. All staff are encouraged to document concerns via the My Concern system so that the DSL can spot patterns in behaviour alongside patterns of attendance so that swift action may be taken.

Guidance for Parents regarding Absence is contained in the Parents' Handbook.

Parents are informed of our expectations that absence from school should be avoided wherever possible.

Linked Policies:

Safeguarding
Educational Visits

Objectives

- To encourage attendance of above 95%
- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.

- To outline clear guidelines to staff if they are concerned about a pupil's attendance
- To provide clear guidance to parents regarding attendance and persistent absence during term time.
- Work with pupils and their parents to understand and address reasons for absence.
- Signpost access to any required services such as early help as necessary
- Maintain the same expectations for attendance with pupils with additional needs
- To outline guidance to staff if a pupil goes missing during the school day (Appendix 2)
- To outline guidance to staff should a pupil go missing on a school trip (Appendix 3)
- To outline guidance to staff of actions to be followed once a child is found (Appendix 4)

Success Criteria

- Implementation of the policy in order to recover a missing child
- Improved attendance from those pupils that are persistently absent.
- Staff raising concerns via the My Concern system relating to punctuality and attendance.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- High expectations for attendance and punctuality of all pupils.

Methodology

1. Implementation

The school maintains an Admissions Register which records the full name of the pupil, name the pupil uses at school, sex, address, the full name and address of each of the pupil's parents, which of the pupil's parents, if any, the pupil normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each such parent can be contacted in an emergency (where reasonably practicable we will hold an emergency contact number for more than one person for each pupil), day, month and year of birth, day, month and year of the pupil's starting day at the school, name and address of the last school the pupil attended, if any.

Where a parent notifies EHS that a child will live at another address the admission register is amended accordingly:

- the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live,
- the new address,
- the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent of a pupil notifies EHS that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school in future, the following will be recorded in the admissions register:

- the name of the new school,
- the date on which the pupil first attended or is due to start.

This also applies to pupils leaving EHS at the end of Year 11.

The school will inform the local authority via the BSCP CME referral system (see appendix 1 or https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/7689/cme_referralformmarch2019) of any pupil who:

- has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 5 school days or more,
- is not at their last known address,
- has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown.

If a child is absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown, members of the pastoral

team have a duty to carry out reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil. This might include:

- a phone call home from reception to establish the reason for the absence and to confirm the child's whereabouts,
- checking with all staff that may have had contact with the child prior to their absence,
- checking with the child's friends, siblings or known relatives at the school,
- asking school friends to check social media activity if appropriate; checking for any changes in the patterns of activity,
- making enquiries to other schools where known relatives attend, telephoning all numbers held on the system including those stated on the "leave of absence form",
- visiting the last known address of the pupil,
- completing the BSCP CME referral form,
- emailing the addresses on the system and requesting evidence of the pupil's location/whereabouts. For example, return flights, medical notes or hospital discharge information.

School will notify the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, and will provide the local authority with the following information about the pupil from the admission register: full name, address, the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with, at least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency, if applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil will start living there, if applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school, and the reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register.

The only reasons why a pupil's name shall be deleted are:

- The pupil has been registered at another school
- The pupil has not continued at the school following completion of nursery education
- The pupil is also registered at one or more other schools and the other schools have agreed the deletion
- The pupil has a school attendance order which has been changed to name another school
- The pupil had a school attendance order which has been revoked
- The parent of a pupil has notified the school in writing that the pupil will be leaving the school to be educated otherwise than at a school
- The pupil no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from school
- The pupil has not returned following a leave of absence and all reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances have been made as set out in this policy
- The pupil has been continually absent from school for 20 school days and all reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances have been made as set out in this policy
- The pupil is detained under a sentence of detention
- The pupil will be over compulsory school age and will not continue into the sixth form
- The pupil has ceased to be a pupil at Edgbaston High School (independent school)
- The pupil has been permanently excluded

In addition, the school will notify the LEA and the LEA where the pupil resides when registering new pupils within 5 days, giving the pupil's address and previous school.

Notification of Absence

Parents are required to notify School on the first day of a pupil's absence and to provide a reason for the absence. The Receptionist or School Secretary will telephone home if no notification of absence has been received by the close of morning register at 9:14 am. Registers close at 1.29 pm in the afternoon in the Preparatory School and at 2.09 pm in the Senior School.

If a pupil needs to leave School during the school day, parents should email, telephone or fill

in the form on the school website to state the nature of the appointment during the school day. Pupils must sign out at the time of leaving the building. If she is returning, she should sign in again. Staff cannot authorise pupils to leave school during the school day without parental permission.

In cases of known absence, such as dental appointments, parents should inform School in advance, using the form on the parent portal

In Senior School If a pupil has been absent for more than 3 days because of illness, the Form Tutor will arrange for work to be collected from subject staff. Work may then be sent home or given to the pupil on her return. The Form Tutor is also responsible for the re-integration of the pupil into school.

Monitoring attendance

The school's Senior Attendance Champion is the Deputy Head Pastoral, Mrs Toni Campbell who can be contacted by ringing main school on 0121 454 5831

- Each half term, attendance and absence data is analysed by the Head of Year in order to identify pupils that have poor attendance. In the Preparatory school this data is analysed by the Deputy Head, Pastoral.
- If patterns emerge then the parent is asked to come into school for a meeting with the Deputy Head Pastoral and/or Head of Year so that a plan can be put in place to support the family and improve attendance.
- If attendance does not meet the expectations of school but there are no safeguarding concerns, a letter will go home to parents informing them of their child's attendance and our expectations. This will also be the case with punctuality.

Barriers to attendance

It is recognised that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include those pupils that have special education needs or suffer from long term medical health conditions, both mental health and physical health.

In these cases, the Deputy Head Pastoral along with the SENDCo, Head of Year and nursing team and any other outside agency will work together in order to put in place a plan/strategy to help them access their full-time education. This may include making reasonable adjustments to the timetable, accessing counselling during the school day or being able to retreat to "safe spaces" as necessary.

Supporting Parents

At times parents may need the support of school to help them with the attendance of their child at school. Parents are encouraged to contact school as soon as possible in this situation to seek help and advice from the Pastoral Team. Details of who to contact can be found in appendix 5.

Illness during the School Day

If a pupil becomes ill during the school day, she should be sent to the School Nurse. The School Nurse or member of the senior management team will then contact parents to ascertain whether she can be collected. No pupil may be sent home without the authorisation of parents.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences include:-

- Truancy where a pupil deliberately absents herself from school.
- Unauthorised holiday in term time.

Recognising Good Attendance

The following strategies are used to encourage good attendance:-

- 100% attendance is recognised and rewarded at the end of each year in the Preparatory School.
- 100% attendance is also recognized at the termly year group awards assemblies. Pupils are supported on their return to school by the Form Tutor.
- The importance of good attendance is promoted and time out of school during term time discouraged.

Registers

Registration documents are legally required. In the Senior School and Preparatory school registration is carried out electronically am and pm. Unexplained absences are followed up by the Receptionist, or School Secretary in Preparatory School, by telephoning home.

Staff who take pupils out of school on a school day must leave an accurate register of pupils who have gone on the trip or Sports fixture with Reception.

Pupils who attend any activity, Music lessons etc, during registration must sign in before going to that activity. In Senior School, pupils sign in at Reception; in the Preparatory School, pupils sign in in classrooms.

Punctuality

Punctuality to registration, lessons and whole-school events (such as morning Assembly) is expected and formal action will follow.

Persistent lateness to morning registration will be reported to parents by the form teacher and if necessary more formal action may be taken.

Preparatory School

Pupils are expected to be in school by 8:50am and are recorded late if they are not in registration by 8:55am in the morning. The register closes at 9:14am after which pupils are recorded as absent and the school secretary will ring home to establish why the pupil is not in school. Pupils in the Preparatory school are escorted off the playground after lunch and into their classrooms, registration occurs at this point. If a pupil is not accounted for at this point appendix 2 of this policy will be enacted.

Senior School

Pupils are expected to be in their form room by 8:45am and are recorded late if they are not in registration by 8:55am. The register closes at 9:14am after which pupils are recorded as absent and the receptionist will ring home to establish why the pupil is not in school. In the afternoon pupils are expected to be in registration by 2:05pm and are recorded as late if not present by 2:10pm. If the pupil is not accounted for appendix 2 of this policy will be enacted.

Senior School lessons

Attendance at and punctuality to lessons are checked by all subject staff and failure to meet expectations is dealt with in accordance with our Behaviour Policy.

Leave of Absence

There are only a few instances where the school can grant an absence for a pupil:

1. Pupil is ill
2. Pupil is attending a medical or dental appointment
3. Pupil is attending an interview
4. Pupil is on agreed school study leave
5. A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable for the pupil agreed by the school with the parent
6. Pupil is taking part in a regulated performance
7. Pupil is attending an offsite approved educational activity
8. Pupil is attending work experience
9. Pupil is participating in an approved sporting activity
10. Exceptional circumstances

In relation to point 10, it is important to note that the Department of Education does not consider **“a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance”**.

If you select “Exceptional Circumstances” parents will need to provide as much information as possible in the notes section of the Leave Request. Parents may be contacted to provide additional information before the request is approved.

The “Leave Requests” form is found on the iSAMS Parent Portal, “Interactive Forms” and then “Leave Requests”. When parents submit a Leave Request, they should use the notes section to record relevant information to their request. Parents will receive an email confirming submission of the request and then a second email when the request has been approved or declined.

2. Monitoring

In Senior School monitoring attendance is carried out by the Heads of Year and the Deputy Head Pastoral and in the Preparatory School by Form Teachers and the Deputy Head Pastoral.

All concerns relating to missing children will be documented on My Concern. The Deputy Head Pastoral will monitor data relating to incidents and update the policy as necessary

Evaluation and review

This policy is evaluated regularly when it is tested by the parent body and any additions and updates will be announced in staff safeguarding updates and governors will be informed. This policy will be reviewed every two years, or before if appropriate.

Signed by Headmistress:

CAMacso

Approved by
The Governing Body

Approved by the Governing Body:

Date:

1/09/24

Review date: August 2026

Appendix 1

Children Missing Education Referral Form

Please complete and return this form by email to cme@birmingham.gov.uk with details of pupils who have unauthorised absence whose whereabouts cannot be traced. Please contact the CME team on 0121 303 4983 for background checks before completing this form.

This form should not be used for matters of persistent absence (see guidance notes below).

CHILD'S DETAILS				
SURNAME*				
FIRST NAME*				
GENDER*		DOB*	YEAR GROUP	
UPN*:				
CURRENT ADDRESS* (include post code)				
PARENT'S NAME/PHONE NO*				
CURRENT/PREVIOUS SCHOOL*				
DATE LAST ATTENDED:				
PUPIL STATUS* (Please tick/delete as appropriate)		<input type="checkbox"/> Looked After Child <input type="checkbox"/> Formerly/Currently Known to Social Services <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Traveller		

	YES	NO
Does the child have a history of non-attendance?		
Is there a pattern of unauthorised term time leave?		
Is this child subject to Private Fostering?		
Do you have any supporting documentation to support relocation out of Birmingham? Please attach.		

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS	
NAME	
JOB TITLE	
TEAM NAME	
TEL NO	
EMAIL	
DATE	

ACTIONS TAKEN PRIOR TO REFERRAL				
OUTCOME OF HOME VISITS				
DATE	AM	PM	ADDRESS VISITED: (if different from above)	WHO DID YOU SPEAK TO? {State relationship to the pupil as well as forename and/or surname)
SAFEGUARDING RISK APPRAISAL (TO BE COMPLETED BY DSL)				
Risk Assessment* (are there any known concerns/safeguarding risks; is this child known to Children's Social Care/subject to a Child protection assessment/plan?)				
Date any concerns referred to MASH:				
Outcome of referral to MASH:				

OUTLINE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

Please return completed form to: cme@birmingham.gov.uk

DO NOT SEND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION UNSECURED. PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU USE AN ENCRYPTION SERVICE.

GUIDANCE NOTES

- This form **should be** used for reporting pupils of statutory school age who are absent from school for no longer than 5 consecutive days without authorisation and **whose whereabouts are unknown**.
- For general reference consult the Department for Education's statutory guidance on children missing education 2016.
- This form **should not** be used for reporting pupils who are absent from school without authorisation **who remain resident at their known address or have moved to another known address**.
- Pupils who leave school and transfer to another school, or who leave school to another district and parents confirm their new address, should be reported to the School Admissions Service via the SECURE ONLINE PORTAL '**In-year notification of pupil movement**'
- Under the Education, Pupil Registration Regulations, schools and academies have a duty to carry out 'reasonable enquiries' into the whereabouts of pupils who meet the criteria for referral via this form. The enquiries schools and academies are expected to undertake are outlined in the checklist with their outcomes recorded on this form.

CHECKLIST

In most circumstances, the school's enquiries will commence **from the first day of unauthorised absence**. Have you:

- ✓ Called the CME team for background checks on the family e.g. schools attended by siblings?
- ✓ As the DSL ensured that any safeguarding concerns have been promptly referred to the Children's Advisory Support Service (CASS) on 0121 303 1888?
- ✓ Tasked appropriate staff to check with all members of staff who the pupil may have had contact with?
- ✓ Checked with the pupil's friends, siblings and known relatives at this school or other schools? Tasked appropriate school staff to conduct telephone calls to ALL numbers held on the pupil file? Tasked appropriate staff to conduct home visit(s) to the last known address of the pupil?
- ✓ If possible, enquired of neighbours as to the location of the family? Sent a letter to the last known address and recorded the outcome?

ALSO:

- ✓ **If there is good reason to believe that a crime may have been committed, have you made a prompt referral to the Police? E.g. this is a very sudden, unexpected situation and/or there are cultural reasons to suspect that the pupil is at risk or there have been past suspicions concerning the pupil and family which, together with the sudden disappearance, are worrying?**
- ✓ **If the pupil is subject to a Child Protection plan or investigation, has the social worker been informed of the pupil's absence?**
- ✓ **Similarly as above if the pupil is 'looked after'?**

In the three instances above, CASS should be informed immediately.

Appendix 2

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING FROM THE SCHOOL

There are various checkpoints throughout the day that would alert staff if a pupil was missing. In nearly every case, the pupil is not intentionally missing and is found safe and well on School premises. The School however cannot take this for granted and needs to act quickly and decisively in the case of an absent pupil. All pupils have to register twice a day, at 8.45 am and at 1.05 / 2.10 pm. Any pupil who leaves School during the day signs out on her departure and back in on her return. A child would only leave school with a prior request from a parent except in the case of Senior pupils visiting the Botanical Gardens.

If a pupil is unaccounted for, the following steps must be taken:

- It should be ascertained, as soon as possible, when the pupil was last seen by an adult or by another pupil if the latter is more recent. Accuracy is vital at this stage.
- The pupil's timetable must be scrutinised to see if they might be having an extra lesson or practice such as Learning Support, Music, Drama, Sport or a house event.
- A thorough search of the School must be undertaken. If it is believed that the pupil has left the premises the tutor should check if their bag/ blazer are missing.
- The Head and the Deputy Heads must be informed and this information then cascaded down to other appropriate staff whose combined duty it is to ensure correct procedures are followed.
- The pupil's parents and/ or guardian must be contacted. In many instances the pupil will have been collected by them but failed to sign out and/ or ask the School for permission for an early departure. Care must be taken not to alarm parents before carrying out the preliminary checks.
- Staff handling the situation must meet at quarter-hourly intervals to pool their information. Procedures for locating a missing child should take no longer than one hour, within which time the police must have been informed. They may suggest contacting local hospitals for information.
- A written record of the situation and steps taken must be completed as soon as possible.

Appendix 3

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED BY STAFF IF A CHILD GOES MISSING ON AN OUTING

- An immediate head count would be carried out in order to ensure that all the other children were present.
- Contact child on mobile device.
- Contact security at the venue.
- An adult would search the immediate vicinity. Another member of staff should contact the school Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).
- Inform the Head of the Preparatory School or Senior School and DSLs.
- Ask the Head to ring the child's parents and explain what has happened and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue depending on the location/the school at once.
- The remaining children would be taken back to a place of safety until the situation is resolved.
- The DSL would inform the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- The School would cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.
- Inform the Chair of Governors.
- The Insurers would be informed.
- A decision to be taken regarding crisis communication.
- A RIDDOR report will be made if appropriate.
- A full record of all activities taken up to the stage at which the child is found will be made for the incident report.

Appendix 4

ACTIONS TO BE FOLLOWED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BY STAFF ONCE THE CHILD IS FOUND

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child.
- Speak to the other children to ensure they understand why they should not leave the premises/separate from a group on an outing.
- The Head of the School will speak to the parents to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- All those involved will be asked to provide a written statement of their account.
- A full investigation will be carried out and a report written - procedures adjusted as necessary.
- A full report will be compiled and considered by the SMT and Health & Safety Committee.
- Media queries should be referred to the Head of Marketing and Development.

Appendix 5

Please contact the respective Head of Year for your daughter's year group if you would like to discuss any concerns that you may have over attendance.

Year 7:	Ms Jones-Owen – jonesowenn@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Year 8:	Ms Egan – egank@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Year 9:	Ms Ajmal – ajmalg@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Year 10:	Mr Shutt – shuttr@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Year 11:	Ms O'Hare - ohares@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Year 12:	Ms Ehiogu – ehioguz@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Year 13:	Ms Parsons – parsonsg@edgbastonhigh.co.uk

If they are not available or if you have an urgent issue, please contact the Deputy Head Pastoral, Ms Antonietta Cirillo-Campbell (Ms Campbell) and my email address is cirilocampbellt@edgbastonhigh.co.uk
Tel: 0121 454831 ext. 227.