

Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School

'Learning Together and having fun'



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Policy in place: March 2012

Policy updated: Nov 2016; March 2018; Sept 2018; Jan 2019; Mar 2021, Mar 2022, Mar 2023

Review date: March 2024

1. Statement of intent

Endon Hall Primary and Nursery School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents/carers.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this Attendance Policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our Attendance Policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officer is V Pickering, who can be contacted via email (office@endonhall.staffs.sch.uk). Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

2. Philosophy and Rationale

The most recent government guidance states that **‘central to raising standards in education and ensuring all children can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – children need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education’**.

All schools are expected to promote excellent attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, ensure every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence. Parents/carers are expected to perform their **legal duty** by ensuring their children attend regularly and arrive to school on time.

A lot of learning takes place during a school day, and any period of absence will affect learning and progress. We place high importance on attendance, and require parent/carer support with this.

3. Legal framework

This policy has regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) ‘Working together to improve school attendance’
- DfE (2022) ‘Keeping children safe in education (2022)’
- DfE (2016) ‘Children missing education’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion & SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing in Education protocol
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school’s ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff where appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s Complaints Policy.

- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education protocol in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of staff to the attendance officer role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and acting as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer, alongside the Headteacher, is responsible for:

- The overall approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

5. Core Principles

Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School strives to maintain effective systems of attendance management by working in partnership with parents/carers to maintain good overall attendance and reduce persistent absence. Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

6. Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school
- To consistently achieve our target for attendance (95%)
- To follow statutory and Local Authority guidance on attendance and punctuality

7. Encouraging Good Attendance

We encourage good attendance by:

- modelling good attendance
- setting and maintaining high expectations for attendance
- publicising good attendance in newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Board
- awarding good attendance certificates and/or rewards to children when they have achieved 100% attendance over the school year

8. **Training of staff**

The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The Governing Board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The Governing Board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

9. **Monitoring of attendance**

All schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day. This shows whether the child is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a child of compulsory school age is absent; every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Only the school can authorise absences, not parents/carers. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given, this is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

The school uses the 'SIMS' attendance system to keep and monitor attendance registers, to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

The school uses the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes are used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday / Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or residential
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment. Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

The Headteacher will apply common sense principles to the decision making process but, in general terms, the only legitimate reasons for absence are:

- Religious observance
- Illness of child (medical evidence may be requested)
- Death of close family member
- Urgent medical appointment
- Other agreed exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher.

Wherever possible, action will be taken by the school to improve a child's attendance and investigate and address any underlying cause of problems before considering whether to make a referral to the appropriate team in the Local Authority.

At Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School we aim to work in partnership with parents/carers. Therefore, there is an expectation that:

Parents/carers will:

1. Telephone the school absence line, preferably before 9am, on EACH day of absence, leaving a message with: child's name, reason for absence, parent/carer name and telephone number and an estimation of how long the absence will last e.g. one school day.

2. Inform the school of any **planned** medical absences in advance.
3. Try to make all medical appointments (doctors, dentist and hospital) out of school time.
4. Put all requests for leave in writing and submit this to the school office in advance.
5. Encourage their child/ren to take responsibility for being on time for school and attending school.

School will:

10. Mark the registers in accordance with the law.
11. Telephone parents/carers who have not contacted the school in relation to the absence of their child on a particular day.
12. Maintain records and monitor attendance on a regular basis.
13. Authorise absences in accordance with the government guidelines and this policy.
14. Provide a termly letter informing parents/carers of their child's attendance figure (Appendix 3).
15. Contact parents/carers when the attendance falls below acceptable levels and/or when particular patterns of absence are causing concerns.
16. Provide access to staff with whom attendance related issues can be discussed.
17. Work with external agencies to maintain good attendance and to support the child/family with any issues that may affect attendance and punctuality.
18. Work with relevant external agencies if a child's attendance becomes a concern.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school system

Where a pupil is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

The school will inform the LA, on a **termly** basis, of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below **85%**, written communication will be sent and/or a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

19. Our approach to attendance

Illness

If your child will not be attending school due to illness, you must notify the school, leaving a message on the school's answer machine. If a child is not in school, and no message has been left explaining the reason for this, the school will telephone the parent/carer, making verbal contact with parents/carers by 10.30am on the first day of absence, to ascertain the reason for absence.

For absences that relate to additional health needs, please see our Children with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy.

Where large numbers of children are absent from school and it would be difficult to contact all parents/carers verbally by 10.30am, a text message or e-mail may be sent in an attempt to ascertain and/or clarify the reason for the absence.

Lateness

Children should arrive just before the official start of the school day and, when the school gates are opened by a member of staff, should make their way to their classroom where the responsible adult will take a register, recording who is present or absent from school.

Any children arriving late should enter the school through the main office and report to the office staff, who will ask the child for a reason explaining their lateness and note their arrival, including for the purposes of fire regulations.

The registers are taken in classes by 9:00am. Any child not in registration at this time will be marked as absent with the appropriate code (if this is known in advance) or 'N', where no reason is known. The registers **officially** close at 9:05am and any child arriving after this time will be marked absent for the session. If a child arrives at school after 9:00am but before 9:05am, parents/carers must sign in at the main office and a 'L' (late) code will be entered. A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision will be made by the school to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence. If unauthorised the 'U' code will be used.

If a child reaches 10 'U' absences over a 12-week period due to lateness, there is the risk of a Penalty Notice being issued.

It is worth noting that if a child is 15 minutes late everyday this is equivalent to missing 10 days of school over the year.

20. **SEND- and health-related absences** – see Children with Additional Heads Needs Attendance Policy

21. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the discretion of the Headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The Headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will utilise the principles in this policy in all decisions making.

22. Leave of Absence

There is no rule which allows for authorisation to be given specifically for holidays. The Department for Education amended the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations in September 2013, removing references to family holidays as well as the statutory threshold of 10 days, making it clear that Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Since then, further amendments have been made and legally, from 1 January 2018, **any** period of unauthorised leave that does not meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances, must be unauthorised. In addition, this may result in a parent/carer receiving a penalty notice/fine.

Exceptional circumstances include:

- Forced leave (where a parent/carer is in the military service)
- Religious observance (a maximum of two days per academic year absence is allowed for religious observance).
- Death of close family member
- Other agreed exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher (these will be considered on a case by case basis).

If a parent/carer wishes to request a period of leave they are required to complete a leave of absence request form (Appendix 2). Forms are available from the school office or via e-mail. If the request does not meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances, it will be unauthorised. Parents/carers will be informed of this by letter and the request will be noted in the register. This will be monitored by the Local Authority during statutory register checks.

A Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence, if issued, is issued per parent/carer, per child. Therefore, if both parents/carers have day-to-day responsibility for the child, then both parents/carers are asked to sign the leave of absence form. Signing of the form constitutes agreement to the request. If a request is received from (and signed by) one parent/carer, the other parent/carer (if both parents/carers have day-to-day responsibility for the child) will be informed by the school.

It is worth noting that a child who takes a 2-week family holiday in term time (10 school days) will only be able to achieve an attendance of 94.7%. This is assuming the child has no illness or medical appointments for the rest of the academic year. This automatically puts the child into the category of monitoring attendance.

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the Headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before or during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below **96%**. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

Leave during lunch times

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the Headteacher – it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The Headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within **one week** of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the Headteacher will ensure a photo lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises within **10 minutes** of the start of lunch and will return no later than **5 minutes** before the end of lunch.

Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register at the school office. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff at the school office has given their permission.

The Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the Headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the Headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a **termly** basis – letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by **8:55am** and **1:15/1:25pm**. The teacher will record the attendance electronically at the end of each session. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The DSL will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Missing children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the Headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - The hall
 - Intervention rooms
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will then begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The Headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

23. Persistent absentees (PA) / Attendance intervention

Persistent absence is attendance which falls below 90%. We are committed to reducing persistent absence as there are strong and proven links between attendance and educational achievement. Attendance of less than 95% (equivalent to 9.5 days or more absence in an academic year) has been shown to compromise attainment and progress. Attendance of 90% is equivalent to missing 19 days or nearly 4 weeks from school in a year.

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and persistent absence (PA), such as:

- Children in need
- Looked After Children (LAC)
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

Children falling to below 95% attendance will be monitored as to whether their attendance improves or deteriorates. The aim is to avoid a child falling into the Persistent Absence category (less than 90% attendance). The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary. Where a pupil at risk of Persistent Absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of persistent absence to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing persistent absence, the Headteacher/Attendance Officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Establish evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.

- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Holding regular reviews.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.
 - Creating attendance clinics.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

School visits and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below 95%, these privileges may be taken away, depending on the reason for the low attendance. The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards e.g. by setting individualised targets.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

24. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the Headteacher/Attendance officer will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Headteacher will issue a fixed penalty notice in line with the LA's code of conduct.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

25. Working with parents to improve attendance

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly (termly) inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school e.g. bullying, the school will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff e.g. the DSL and SENDCo, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the school will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

26. Monitoring and analysing absence

The Headteacher/attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole
- Individual year groups
- Individual pupils
- Demographic groups e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds
- Other groups of pupils e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM
- Pupils at risk of PA

The school will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes
- Particular days of poor attendance
- Historic trends of attendance and absence
- Barriers to attendance

The school will inform staff across the school of any patterns, to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Headteacher/attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Governing Board will regularly review attendance data, including recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

Penalty Notices / Fines

A penalty notice leads to the initiation of a fine, initially of £60 per parent/carer. If this £60 is not paid within 21 days from the date of issue it rises to £120. If after 28 days of the date of issue the £120 is not paid the Local Authority will prosecute the parents/carers under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. This will lead to a hearing in the Magistrates Court and may result in a fine of up to £1,000 per parent/carer. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Monitoring/Evaluation

We believe this policy will only be effective if we ensure consistency across the school by regular monitoring. Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96%. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Weekly attendance figures will be shared with parents/carers via the school Newsletter. Termly attendance figures for individual children will be reported to parents/carers and the collective termly attendance figures will be reported to the Governing Board. We will maintain a strong link with the Education Welfare Worker in order to support us in monitoring attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Colour Codes

<p>95% - 100% WELL DONE! THIS IS EXCELLENT! Excellent attendance – well done! Children make the most of their education giving them the best potential for achieving academic success.</p>
<p>90% - 94% GOOD Be careful – if your child is in the yellow group they could be missing up to 19 days of learning in the whole year. 90% attendance over 5 years is equal to half a school year missed.</p>
<p>Less than 90% PERSISTENT ABSENTEE DANGER – with this level of absence your child is missing more than 4 weeks of learning in the school year. SEVERE LOSS OF LEARNING TIME.</p>

Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School



Request for leave during term time

To the Headteacher of: Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School

Date:

I request a leave of absence from school during term time for:

my child (full name)

for the period from (date) to (date)

Destination:

The exceptional circumstances and reason for this request are: -

.....
.....
.....

I have (an)other child(ren) in this/another school as follows:

Child(ren) (full name/s)..... School(s) attended

.....
.....

Signature of 1st parent/carer Print Name:

Signature of 2nd parent/carer Print Name:

Please return the completed form to the school office at least 1 month before the Leave of Absence is due. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

Current Attendance%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time this academic year

The (above) request for leave is **agreed**/is **not agreed** by the Headteacher.

Rationale to decline request:

Date (including date notification of decision letter was sent to parent/carer):

Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, **complete the attached form and send it to the head teacher**. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **well before** the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
2. The Department for Education makes it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Head teachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
4. Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects, that they should be in school during term time.
5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
 - frequency of similar requests
 - whether the parent made the request in advance
 - students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
6. Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, Headteachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.
7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. Should the school decide **not to grant leave of absence** and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**, which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 **per parent* per child**. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.
9. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law.

* Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

Appendix 3

Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School



Hillside Avenue
Endon
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST9 9HH
Tel: 01782 502645

Every Child Matters and Every Lesson Counts: School attendance is vital for young people to reach their full potential. School attendance is a priority for **Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School** and we closely monitor attendance. We want to work together with parents/carers to help ensure **excellent** attendance and punctuality from every child.

Dear Parent/Carer,

TERMLY ATTENDANCE LETTER

Endon Hall Primary & Nursery School closely monitors the attendance of all children and, as part of this process, we would like to inform you of your child's current termly percentage attendance level. We understand that some absence due to illness is unavoidable; however, we do have a duty to report on attendance.

Below is your child's current attendance level, together with the school's attendance target.

Name of Child: _____ Term: _____

Attendance	
Authorised Absence	
Unauthorised Absence	
School Target	95%

The information below shows how attendance can affect children's learning and progression.

95% - 100%

Excellent attendance – well done! Children make the most of their education giving them the best potential for achieving academic success.

90% - 94%

Be careful – if your child is in the yellow group they could be missing up to 19 days of learning in the whole year. 90% attendance over 5 years is equal to half a school year missed.

Less than 90%: PERSISTENT ABSENCE

DANGER – with this level of absence your child is missing more than 4 weeks of learning in the school year, which constitutes SEVERE LOSS OF LEARNING TIME.

It is vital that all children attend school regularly in order to maximise their educational and other opportunities. If you require any further information or support, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Miss V Lewis
Headteacher