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Evolve Academy

Attendance Policy for Pupils

01/01/24



Nurturing inclusive learning communities



1	Summary	Attendance Policy			
2	Responsible person	Nigel Hall and Bernadette Lavin			
3	Accountable ELT member	Matt Long			
4	Applies to	All Pupils			
5	Trustees and/or individuals who have overseen development of this policy	Governing body and SLT			
6	Headteachers/Service Heads who were consulted and have given approval (if applicable)	Alice Kleinman			
7	Equality impact analysis completed	Policy Screened	Y/N	Template completed	Y/N
8	Ratifying committee(s) and date of final approval	Click or tap			
9	Version	3.1			
10	Available on	Every	Y	Trust Website	N
				Academy Website	Y
				Staff Portal	Y
11	Related documents (if applicable)	Safeguarding Policy, Admissions Policy, Wakefield Attendance Strategy 2023-2026, Wakefield working together to improve school attendance			
12	Disseminated to	All staff			
13	Date of implementation (when shared)				
14	Date of next formal review	01 Jan 2025			
15	Consulted with Recognised Trade Unions				
16	Adopted by Ethos Academy Trust following consultation				

Date	Version	Action	Summary of changes
08/07/2022	*3.0	*Major policy revision	*Re-write of original documentation
20/11/2023	3.1	* Review of policy	* Updates incorporating new DSL and Head teacher, new terminology linked to KCSIE 2023 * Updated staged responses

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1. Introduction

At Evolve Academy we understand how important school attendance is and how this relates to outcomes, not only academically but socially and emotionally as well. Pupils who attend school regularly benefit from fulfilling peer relationships, better academic outcomes and a vastly improved school experience which promotes successful transition onto their next stage of education.

This policy sets out the procedures through which we seek to improve school attendance, improve punctuality and, as a result, raise levels of achievement. This policy is written with regard for the legal powers and duties included in the following:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010; and
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

This policy has also been written in conjunction with 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (DfE, May 2022) guidance which applies from September 2022.

2. School Attendance, Absence and the Law

We believe that there is a clear link between attendance and positive outcomes for children and young people. Our aim therefore is to encourage full attendance for all pupils at Evolve Academy. We do this first by:

- Creating a warm and welcoming environment based upon nurture principals;
- Ensuring that pupils feel safe;
- Supporting positive relationships with staff and peers;
- Making education enjoyable, interesting and appropriate to every child's needs;
- Encouraging, praising and rewarding success.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an appropriate, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/ carer to make sure their child receives that education.

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. We recognise the strong link between attendance and safeguarding, and always consider any safeguarding needs or concerns alongside any attendance issues.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, we will work with pupils, parents and external agencies to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Securing good attendance involves many elements which include effective practices in the curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources. It requires the support of all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, as well as the board of trustees, the local authority, and other local partners.

Any absence is detrimental for pupils and will impact on their school experience. Evolve Academy and its staff will always work with pupils, families and external agencies to look at all attendance issues as we realise that there are often other factors to consider that may impact on a child's ability to attend school. We aim to create and build a positive relationship with our pupils and their parents/carers to ensure we are working together to address any issues.

Further guidance can also be found at:

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-attendance-and-absence/>

3. Roles and responsibilities

Our Responsibilities as an Academy

All schools are required to record details of pupils' attendance and absence. They do so at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. If a child is absent, it is required that parents/carers inform the school of the reason for the absence.

Evolve Academy will record the absence under a particular category pre-set by the Department of Education (DfE). This data is then available to the attendance and pupil support service for each pupil. DfE also receives annually the overall data for each academy.

Every member of staff within Evolve Academy has a responsibility to promote and support attendance.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Continually monitor and implement policies and strategies;
- Regularly produce data to analyse attendance information and ensure procedures are in place to address issues;
- Implement a robust line management system that ensures all concerns are identified and addressed in a timely manner;
- Report to pupils and parents/carers regularly;
- Raise the profile of attendance across the school
- Implement reward systems that motivate pupils to attend well;
- Support colleagues with systems that are accessible and ensure positive outcomes;
- Report regularly to the CEO and Trust board.
- Regularly updating a pastoral tracker identifying weekly and half termly trends and patterns.
- On day 3 of absence without any contact from parent/ carer after attendance procedures (home visits) have been followed the DSL to follow safe guarding processes and procedures by contacting relevant external agencies (police and social care).

All staff will:

- Work to provide an environment that is welcoming and promotes good attendance;
- Ensure relationships with pupils are positive and individual needs are identified and addressed;
- Work with parents/carers to build positive, transparent relationships;
- Contact parents/carers regularly in the case of any absence and to recognise sustained and improved attendance;
- Ensure attendance is recorded including reasons behind any absences;
- Work with the data to address any reoccurring issues or patterns (such as the same day absence every week);
- Liaise with colleagues and be aware of any related issues;
- Promote a culture of mutual respect and ensure pupils are valued every day;
- Work closely with colleagues to communicate any issues that may impact attendance;
- Meet regularly with parents/carers and related professionals to address any issues affecting attendance;
- Ensure support plans are in place that make clear the roles and responsibilities of school/parent/carer and other professionals (including the mainstream school for students who are dual registered);
- Reward good and improved attendance in a fair and equitable way ensuring parents / carers are informed.

Responsibilities of Parents / Carers

- Ensure your child attends every day unless there is a legal reason;
- Notify the school (before 09:00 AM or as soon as possible) when your child has to be unexpectedly absent (sickness);
- To be present for an attendance related home visit before day 3 of absence;
- Attend regular review meetings and meet with staff on request;
- Arrange holidays out of term time;
- Actively promote good attendance by encouraging and supporting your child to attend;
- Make medical or other appointments out of school time unless unavoidable;
- It is the parents, responsibility to obtain a medical note from the GP or health services ASAP for any prolonged absences;
- Work with staff to implement agreed strategies and actively promote good attendance.

Responsibilities of Pupils

- Attend school punctually and regularly
 - Ensure any requests for known absence are made available to their form teacher (including pre- arranged medical appointments)
-

4. Daily routines and registration procedure

At Evolve Academy, our school day starts at 09.00am and finishes at 2.00pm. Pupils are welcomed into the school each day by staff members on duty at the pupil entrance. Pupils are also greeted warmly by staff and staff check in with each pupil on arrival. Registers close at 9.45am. We provide a daily healthy breakfast at Evolve Academy (from 08.45) and we know that this starts the day positively and pupils can then focus and learn. If the pupil is late then an important part of the day is missed and this can then lead to an unsettled day. It is important that we work together to ensure pupils arrive on time and ready to learn.

- The school day starts at 9.00am and finishes at 2.00pm
- Morning registration is between 9.00am - 9.45am, registers will be closed at 9.45am
- First response call or text after registers are called
- Pupils are registered in their groups by staff
- Afternoon registration is between 12.00pm - 12.45pm, registers will close at 12.45pm
- Pupils are registered in their afternoon lesson by staff

5. The Importance of Good Attendance

Evolve Academy has high expectations for our pupils and as such the expected attendance is at least 90%. Anything less than this is a concern and we take all appropriate measures to ensure we are addressing any barriers to attendance. We will always work with a pupil, their families and any appropriate external agencies to find solutions and promote the benefits of good attendance.

8 days absence in a year = 96%. 19 days absence = 90%

- 90% attendance = ½ day missed every week.
- Over one school year this is 4 weeks of learning lost.
- Over the 5 years at school the pupil will have missed half a year.
- What impact might this have on a child's future?

Pupils being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning:

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.
- Arriving 30 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

We aim to ensure that all pupils recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality for the next stage of their education or training as it is a vital life skill.

Impact of Lost Learning	
0-2 days absent	99-100% attendance
4-7.5 days absent	96-98% attendance
9.5-17 days absent	93-95% attendance

- Attendance rewards achieved
- High level of engagement with learning opportunities
- Individual needs identified and appropriate support put in place
- Positive relationships developed with peers and staff
- Transition to long-term setting fully supported
- Pupil at risk of not achieving their full potential
- Risk of pupil's needs not being fully identified and supported

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some positive relationships developed with key staff and peers • Attendance awards achieved for improving attendance • Transition to long-term setting able to be supported
19-25 days absent	90-92% attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk of underachievement • High risk of pupil's needs not being identified and supported • Transition to long term provision likely to be difficult to plan • Behaviour meetings needed to support improvements
27 days absent	Under 89% attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme risk of underachievement • Extreme risk of pupil's needs not being identified and supported • Transition to long term provision extremely difficult to plan which could impact on the success of the transition period • Behaviour contract needed to support improvements

6. Attendance Rewards

At Evolve Academy we understand how important it is that pupils attend and are punctual every day. We work to ensure that our pupils understand this also and that they attend school because they are aware of the benefits to them.

Our reward system is in place to further motivate pupils and to demonstrate the benefits of school attendance. The rewards available could include:

- Regular postcards and phone calls home to ensure parents/carers are kept informed
- Weekly and half termly rewards. This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate success.
- Weekly celebration to nominate students who have good attendance.
- Half termly reward focuses that the pupils have identified as of value to them and will motivate them to keep attending.
- Considering personalised motivational strategies that will work for individuals.

7. Concerns about attendance

- In case of absence we will contact parents/carers by text/ phone and, if this is not possible, a home visit will be arranged. Any concerns will be passed to the relevant services. If there are sufficient concerns and a pupil is not seen or a parent/carer cannot confirm their whereabouts a 101 call will be made to inform the police.
- Evolve Academy colleagues will work with parents/carers from the first day of absence to ensure that any underlying issues are addressed in a timely manner with the relevant services. Working together with parents/carers is essential to ensure good attendance and only when this working relationship is effective can we manage any issues.
- If the non-attendance continues we will continue to communicate with parents/carers, mainstream school (if dual registered). For some young people the placement may not be successful, in cases where pupils are dual-registered, the referring mainstream school would consider alternatives. All related agencies would be consulted and a joint decision would be made in the pupil's best interest.

8a. Persistent Absence (PA)

The Government identifies persistent absence as any pupil who has attendance of less than 90%. Evolve Academy recognises this figure and aspires to set this standard for all its pupils.

Personalised attendance targets may be adjusted dependent on the needs of the individual pupil. Evolve Academy will put into place all reasonable measures to secure and sustain improved attendance.

If all avenues of support have been facilitated and the appropriate educational support have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is possible to constitute neglect. Should this be the case, Evolve Academy will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

8b. Severe Absence

Ethos Academy Trust defines severe absence as those pupils attending school for less than 50% of the time. The data, targeted actions and impact measures linked to severe absence are reported into governance on a termly basis.

8. Attendance Monitoring Programme

Evolve Academy implement a 6-stage programme to encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality. The programme supports parents/carers to improve their child’s attendance

Stage		Actions
Stage 1	Informal monitoring; Absence Response	<p>Staff will follow the Absence Response flowchart (appendix 1). This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone calls home to ascertain reasons for absence, identify barriers that can be easily removed; Home visit(s) as agreed by SLT/ attendance lead as necessary. Ways forward to improve attendance and identified barriers will be discussed and agreed; <p>If further intervention is required because there has been no improvement in attendance then move to stage 2.</p>
Stage 2	Student engagement and integration officer/ DSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home visits by Attendance team and discussed with DSL. Way’s forward to improve attendance will be discussed and agreed External agencies will be contacted to support if a pupil has external agencies working with them. <p>If further intervention is required because there has been no improvement in attendance move to stage 3</p>
Stage 3	Student engagement and integration officer/ DSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with parents/carers and the pupil to set targets. Student’s attendance will be monitored daily. The plan will be put into action and monitored through our systems. This will be reviewed after an agreed period of time and successful outcomes will be measured and recorded. <p>If further intervention is required because there has been no or limited improvement in attendance the next stage will be implemented.</p>

<p>Stage 4</p>	<p>Senior Leader for Attendance meeting:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting with parents/carers and the pupil to review the attendance progress. ○ New targets and a plan will be agreed at this meeting. ○ This will be reviewed after an agreed period of time and successful outcomes will be measured and recorded. <p>If further intervention is required because there has been no or limited improvement in attendance the next stage will be implemented.</p>
<p>Stage 5</p>	<p>Head Teacher and Senior Leader for Attendance meeting:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senior Leader will meet with the parents/carers and the pupil to review the attendance targets and next steps. ○ This meeting will be a discussion on how prosecution for non-attendance can be avoided. ○ The reviewed targets will be put into action and monitored. ○ This will be reviewed after an agreed period of time and successful outcomes will be measured and recorded. <p>If further intervention is required because there has been no or little improvement in attendance.</p>
<p>Stage 6</p>	<p>Legal enforcement</p>	<p>Penalty Notices will be considered when a parent has failed in their duty as defined in section 7 of The Education Act 1996 to ensure the regular school attendance of their child. Evidence should be available to demonstrate that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support has been offered by the Academy; ● All reasonable attempts have been made to engage the parent and to provide opportunities for the parent to address the poor attendance; ● Parenting support has been offered which were clear in the expectations of the parent and of the support that would be offered; ● Support and guidance from external agencies have been discussed/ offered ● Parents have been made aware of the legal sanctions available including the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued; ● The pursuit of an Education Supervision Order or a Parenting Order may not be appropriate to bring about improvement in the student's attendance. <p>Failure to adhere to the contract may result in legal action being considered.</p> <p>Prosecution will be authorised by the Head Teacher if appropriate evidence supports this.</p>

9. Pupils on part time timetables

At Evolve Academy, all teaching and non-teaching staff have responsibility for the care of pupils who are struggling to access learning. We recognise however, that at certain stages in a child or young person's school life they may struggle to access the typical provision offered as a result of their Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Even when the curriculum is reasonably

adapted in line with best teaching and learning practice and the young person is appropriately supported within our usual systems, there are occasions when a pupil may still struggle to access full time education. In these instances, the Head Teacher may consider that a personalised timetable is an appropriate means of supporting the young person up until the point when they are better able to access full time education. Partial timetables will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Examples of when this is appropriate may include:

- At transition points – into or between settings;
- When the child or young person has repeated or prolonged episodes of crisis in school;
- When a risk assessment shows that their behaviour poses a significant health and safety risk to themselves, other pupils or staff which cannot be reasonably managed within the usual day;

If the Head Teacher considers a personalised timetable is appropriate, a clear plan for this should be completed in line with Wakefield guidelines. This plan and the reasons for it, will be communicated to parents and carers along with the arrangements for its regular review. The aim of a personalised timetable will always be to support the young person so that they can return to full time education as soon as possible. The duration will however, depend on the needs of the individual but will remain in place for the shortest time necessary.

Evolve Academy will inform Wakefield Education Safeguarding Service when using reduced timetables for pupils and follow the Wakefield reduced timetable guidance.

10. Children missing education (CME)

Children missing in education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at a school (for example, at home or in alternative provision). Children missing in education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) later in life. All pupils at risk of CME are reported to the Local Authority in line with relevant guidance within agreed timescales. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education. It is vital that local authorities make judgements on a case-by-case basis. This may include children from the following vulnerable groups below (this list is not exhaustive):

- Pupils at risk of harm/neglect
- Children of Service Personnel
- Missing children and runaways
- Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System
- Children of new migrant families
- Children of Gypsy, Roma Traveller Families

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Effective intervention should be at the earliest opportunity in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

At Evolve Academy, we appreciate that the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that all children and young people of compulsory school age receive suitable and appropriate education. School will support the Local Authority in ensuring that this duty is carried out effectively. There are specific duties in respect of Children Missing Education (CME) and there

are strict guidelines in respect of both the definition of CME and the legalities of deleting a pupil from a school roll. We understand that it is essential that the DSL contact the Wakefield Education Safeguarding Service and complete a CME referral to inform them where any pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive days without a reason being provided for the absence. In line with Wakefield's Education Safeguarding Service CME guidance for schools (September 2020) and Department for Education Children Missing in Education Guidance, Evolve Academy will make reasonable enquiries to locate the child in line with the Centre's duty under section 10 of the Children's Act 2004.

Reasonable enquiries to find the child include:

- Checking with all members of staff who the child/young person may have had contact with
- Checking with the pupil's friends, siblings, and known relative
- Checking with other professionals who may be involved or have had contact with the pupil or family
- Making telephone calls to any numbers held/identified including emergency contacts
- Sending a letter to the last known address
- Carrying out home visits at different times to check who is at the home address and other known addresses and check with neighbours and known friends
- Asking for the address the family is moving to
- Requesting copies of flight information if appropriate

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive and each case will be considered on its individual merits ensuring all the facts of the case have been taken into account. Additional enquiries to those above may be necessary. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, Evolve Academy will make a referral to Children's Social Care and Police in accordance with the West Yorkshire Police Truancy policy (if appropriate).

Wakefield Children Missing Education (CME) team can be contacted via the email below:

educationcme@wakefield.gov.uk.

Children who are absent from education (CAE)

Defined as children who are absent from education for a prolonged period of time or repeated occasions (school to follow policies and procedures).

Elective home education

Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time. Guidance as follows [Elective home education: guide for parents \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

The post-pandemic rise in school absence includes a significant number of cases where reasons for not attending include those linked to emotionally based factors, particularly anxiety.

'Emotionally Based School Avoidance' is not a diagnosis, but an umbrella term for this issue, which can be attributed to a multitude of factors and barriers.

The Wakefield approach to attendance difficulties including EBSA aims to enable schools/settings and/or services to identify the underlying needs and barriers in each case, so that any which

include elements of anxiety can be provided with appropriate support and intervention following an evidence-based framework of support.

For further information and support relating to EBSA, Wakefield have produced the following document:

<https://www.tradedservices.wakefield.gov.uk/Pages/Download/d780a42e-d97b-488f-ae78-8b421de4f2ca/PageSectionDocuments>

<https://www.wakefieldparentcarers.co.uk/emotionally-based-school-avoidance-ebsa>

Appendix 1: Related documents

[297313 - FINAL School Attendance Strategy - Summary Leaflet - 8pp A4 - HR \(print-ready\) \(1\).pdf](#)

[297316 - FINAL School Attendance Strategy - 30pp A4 \(V4\).pdf](#)

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupils-attendance-guidance-for-schools>

Wakefield traveller and Gypsy attendance guidance.

<https://www.tradedservices.wakefield.gov.uk/Pages/Download/b18c2fbc-ccd0-46bc-b825-e205b122b281/PageSectionDocuments>

Appendix 2: Absence response flowchart for Evolve Academy

