



The Ecclesbourne School

“Learning together for the future”

Attendance Plan (Including CV19 measures) 2020-2021

October 2020

Introduction

During these unprecedented times of CV19, The Ecclesbourne School continues to be committed to working co-operatively and effectively with all students, staff, parents and relevant agencies to ensure the best possible attendance levels and lowest unauthorised absence rate for all its students.

This attendance plan is written in conjunction with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding policy (2019), Behaviour and Discipline policy and the DfE’s School Attendance Guidance (2018).

1. Background

The Ecclesbourne School is divided into three separate schools: Lower School, Upper School and Sixth Form. Each “school” has its own Head of School with a Head of Year being allocated to each year group. Lower school students are allocated to all-ability tutor groups of 30 in Years 7 –9. Upper School students, Years 10 and 11 are divided between 9 and 11 tutor groups respectively. Sixth form students, Years 12 and 13 are placed into 9 and 8 tutor groups respectively. This is done so that tutors can monitor more closely each individual student.

Whilst the emphasis is on monitoring effort and achievement the School recognises excellent attendance as being key to success and will work with all stakeholders to ensure that students attend as many school days as possible. Moreover, a student going missing from an educational setting is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and is monitored robustly.

Similarly, punctuality is equally important and the administration desk, form tutor, and teaching staff monitor late arrival to school, form and lessons.

2. Attendance

Schools are required to take an Attendance Register twice a day. This shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

The Ecclesbourne School uses the Attendance and Absence Codes, in the Attendance Registers, as required by the DfE School Attendance Guidance for Academies. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. The cause of each absence is always required.

Statutory guidelines state “Head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances”. Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances should be made in advance of the event and in writing with specific details included such as dates, and should be addressed to the Head of

School, or by completion of the school's dedicated Leave of Absence Request Form.

If a leave of absence is granted, then it will be for a fixed period of time. Should the absence not be granted, but still taken, then it will be classed as unauthorised leave of absence.

Authorised absences are sessions away from school for a good reason such as illness or another unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. Classification is made in the following ways:

- a) Unauthorised absence: for any other absence from school which has not been requested and cannot be authorised.
This may include:
 - parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
 - truancy during the school day
 - absences which have never been properly explained
- b) Unauthorised leave of absence: for any absence from school which has been requested but not granted. In accordance with DfE guidelines, the Head of School will not authorise absence during term-time.
- c) Authorised leave of absence: where a request has been made and been considered exceptional circumstances. Heads of schools will consult with each other if a request involves siblings.
- d) Absence due to a CV19 test or isolation is authorised and has a X code.
- e) In the event of a local restriction or lockdown due to CV19 the school will comply with DfE requirements regarding attendance recording and figures.

3. Parents and Carers

Throughout this plan the term 'parent' refers to all adults or carers with either Parental Responsibility, or are responsible for the day-to-day care of the pupil.

Students are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the student. If a student is reluctant to attend, it is never advisable to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the school in resolving any problems.

Wherever possible the school will take action to improve a student's attendance and address any underlying causes of problems before requesting legal intervention.

4. Daily Procedure

Currently different year group bubbles enter the school via designated entrances and we operate a staggered start and end of day. Form tutors are available in form rooms from 8.40 each day. Students arriving by school bus are escorted from the bus bay to their year group base. For students who do not use the school buses the staggered start times are as follows: VI Form arrive at school for 8.40, Year 10 and 11 for 8.50 and Years 7-9 for 9.00. At the end of the day, VI Form leave at 3.15, Year 10 and 11 at 3.35 and Years 7, 8 and 9 at 3.40. Students who use the school bus service are provided with a year group waiting area to enable the safe organisation of students on to the buses. The old student entrance (year 9 Bubble area) and all other bubble area gates are locked at 9:10am.

The Head Teacher, members of SLT, PLT and some admin staff monitor bubble entrances in the morning between 8.30 and 9.00am. One member of the SLT will be in the village.

5. Form Tutors

- 1) Currently the form tutor registers their tutor group once a day and completes the attendance register. All teachers who are form tutors either have their own laptop or access to a computer in their tutor base from which they register their tutees each morning. Afternoon attendance is registered by the teacher

who will be teaching that class period 4. Year 12 and year 13 students who do not have period 4 register in the main hall and 6th form centre respectively.

- 2) Morning attendance registers are completed by 9:10am. The registers are amended to reflect any late arrivals. The afternoon register should be completed by 1:40pm
- 3) During exam shape of the day registration must be completed within the first ten minutes of form time.
- 4) Tutors should have a conversation with a student when they return to school after an absence. They should refer any concerns to the Head of Year.
- 5) Tutors should alert Heads of Year to any concerning patterns of absence or punctuality.
- 6) On return to school tutors request an absence note from the student if the register has not been amended. Tutors should need to collect fewer absence notes as the phone calls home should generate authorisation for most absences.
- 7) If a student is missing from afternoon registration but has been marked present at morning registration or previous lesson the form tutor is to alert the Office Admin Team immediately. The Office Admin Team will check attendance log to ascertain whether the student has signed out. The Office Admin Team will alert the relevant school offices and will assist in conducting a search of the school site.

The system is very powerful and allows tutors, Heads of Year and Heads of School to:

- Track attendance patterns for individual students.
- Monitor % rate of attendance.
- Alert both the tutor and Head of Year to potential difficulties early.
- Provide data linked to holiday leave and other possible categories of absence.
- Clearly see and easily interpret attendance data.
- The system provides data easily for monitoring and the reports the system generate can be used as evidence when communicating with parents.

The school uses an absence notification system whereby parents of students who have not registered in the morning receive a text alert. This is sent home for each day of absence. Calls as quickly as possible to ascertain the whereabouts of students. This is done for each day of absence.

This is in line with our wish to continuously enhance our communication with parents and in this case, further safeguard our students and ensure that their parents know if they have not arrived at school. This system continues to work well.

6. Designated Attendance Officer and Admin

- 1) Review attendance register for their school and ensures registers are completed.
- 2) A text message followed by a phone call is triggered for all absent students to their parents (this is completed for each day of absence)
- 3) Phone calls are made as quickly as possible to ascertain the whereabouts of students.
- 4) Designated Attendance Officer for Sixth Form will issue lateness texts to parents
- 5) Designated attendance officer for Sixth Form will visit reception at break time to check break time attendance.

7. Teaching Staff

- 1) All students are registered at the beginning of every lesson using SIMs Lesson Monitor which not only records attendance for that lesson but also punctuality.
- 2) If a student is missing from a lesson but has been marked present at registration or previous lesson the staff member is to alert the Office Admin Team immediately. The Office Admin Team will alert the relevant school offices and will assist in conducting a search of the school site.
- 3) In some cases individual risk assessments may require teaching staff to use the 'SLT call out' facility.
- 4) If a member of staff is concerned about a student's absence or notice a pattern of absence they should speak with the student's Head of Year or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- 5) Members of staff supervising the main reception at break time will assist reception to supervise the Sixth Form signing in/out at reception. Sixth Form students should not be allowed to leave the school site at break time or lunchtime if their arrival results in lateness.

Review Date: Oct 2021

Responsibility: Deputy Head Teacher – Lower School

8. Pastoral Leadership Team & Pastoral/Attendance Support Officer

- 1) The PLT (Head Teacher, Heads of School, Heads of Year, Progress Leaders, SENCO, Pastoral Support Worker and Safeguarding Support Officer) meet weekly on a Wednesday to discuss attendance, punctuality, behaviour, safeguarding, Mental Health and any other concerns.
- 2) The PLT have access to weekly attendance reports and will discuss points of action.
- 3) The DSL and Pastoral/Attendance officer will send attendance information letters to parents where appropriate.
- 4) The Pastoral/ Attendance support officer will complete home visits with Head of Year / Head of School / DSL where necessary.

9. Heads of Year

- 1) Track attendance patterns for individual students
- 2) Monitor % rate of attendance
- 3) Interview students with concerning levels of attendance
- 4) Alert the Head of School to potential difficulties early
- 5) Meet with parents as appropriate to discuss attendance
- 6) Attend meetings / home visits with the Pastoral Support Worker / DSL
- 7) Contact parents if the school cannot verify student whereabouts on the school site

10. Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)

- 1) If they are not teaching, members of SLT will respond to SLT call out from teaching staff.
- 2) If needed, they will support Heads of Year and the Pastoral Support Worker in parental meetings/communication.
- 3) SLT members go to the village regularly to encourage potential late comers to go to school on time and will also monitor late buses.
- 4) SLT members at lunchtime should be visible and encourage students to be prompt to period 4 ready for the lesson and afternoon registration.
- 5) Students attending provision off site are registered and the Head of School is responsible for ensuring the School is informed of absence promptly.
- 6) Arrangements for School visits and field trips require copies of registers and arrangements for safeguarding the students to be provided to the Deputy Head Learning Services as part of the Risk Assessment process.
- 7) Currently, SLT and PLT are at school entrances to ensure that students understand the importance that is placed on punctuality.

11. Designated Safeguarding Lead - Children at Risk of Missing Education

- 1) Liaise with Pastoral Support Worker to monitor vulnerable students' attendance. Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions.
- 2) Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead has concerns about a student, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

12. Primary Feeder Schools

The Ecclesbourne School works closely with its primary feeder schools to ensure that transition is smooth. When it is considered that there may be difficulties with individual students, The School works closely with all agencies to try and minimise the difficulties prior to transfer. This additional support might mean additional visits for anxious students or well supported visits for students with specific difficulties or high

levels of need.

Where problems persist with individual students they are referred, in the first instance to our Attendance Officer who, together with the student's Head of Year, will decide a plan of action. Progress with relation to named students is discussed regularly with the Head of Year/Head of School. The Attendance Officer meets fortnightly with each Head of Year and liaises closely with the relevant tutor teams to ensure that missing marks are explained quickly and any worrying patterns of attendance can be addressed quickly.

2020-21 Plan

Whole School Attendance Performance Figures

Academic Year	% Attendance	% Authorised Absence	% Unauthorised Absence	% students with attendance < 85%	*%studentswith attendance < 90% Persistent absence	*% of PP students with attendance < 85%	% of PP students with attendance < 90%
2015-2016	96.44	3.25	0.29	2.1	4.3	2.1	6.3
2016-2017	96.60	3.20	0.31	1.71	5.89	2.44	14.63
2017-2018	95.8	3.8	0.4	3.59	7.86	24.39	18.68
2018-2019	95.6	4.2	0.2	3.32	7.84	30.77	19.57
2019-March 2020	95.6	4.4	0.4	4.34	8.34	26.92	24.00

It should be noted that the unauthorised absence figure is made up almost entirely of students whose absence was unauthorised as a consequence of taking family holidays.

*The government have revised the criteria for Persistent Absence. As of Academic year 2015-2016 students whose attendance drops below 93% (previously 90%) will now be considered as persistently absent. For comparison data has been recalculated and included for previous years.

The attendance of Sixth Form is monitored by the Head of Sixth Form. Sixth form students are considered persistently absent if the figure drops below 93%.

Targets for 2020-2021

1. To maintain the current unauthorised absence figures.
2. Monitoring: to maintain the process as outlined in the background and review annually.
3. To seek to identify earlier possible difficulties with specific students and seek, through PLT and other regular meetings, to involve the Attendance Officer as soon as possible. Regular meetings between the Attendance Officer and the PLT is already proving to be most effective and we aim to build on this success. It is hoped that this very proactive approach will prove effective this year with those students whose attendance is persistently poor, albeit that there are very few in this category.
4. Students persistently late to school are identified through the new students/visitor reception system. These students to be sanctioned to ensure punctuality. Letters will be sent to parents to encourage punctuality.
5. To monitor closely unauthorised absence, particularly family holidays, in line with LA guidelines.
6. To make best possible use of the SIMS Attendance Module by ensuring that all personnel are trained to use it as effectively as possible.
7. To reward 100% attendance and raise its importance through virtual assemblies. 100% termly attendance to be rewarded by a certificate. 100% attendance for a whole year to be rewarded by a cinema voucher (funded by the PSFA). 100% attendance for 2 whole years (Lower School) or three (Upper School) to be rewarded with a prize presented during the annual Prize Giving Ceremony. A further prize is available for any student who achieves 100% attendance for five years.
8. To use the lesson attendance for all year groups to great effect for punctuality and attendance and respond accordingly to any issues in both areas.

Review Date: Oct 2021

Responsibility: Deputy Head Teacher – Lower School

*In order to achieve the above targets, Progress Leaders, Heads of Year and Heads of School will need to ensure that monitoring of attendance occurs regularly. Refer to “**Procedure**” for details of frequency.*

Key Staff

Mr R Nicoll	Deputy Head Teacher /Head of Learning Services
Mrs P Owen-Moore	Deputy Head Teacher/Head of Lower School
Mrs C Ourabi	Deputy Head Teacher/Head of Upper School
Mr S Carnwell	Assistant Head Teacher/Head of Sixth Form
Mr D Duncker-Brown	Assistant Head Teacher
Mr D Ingram	Head of Year 7
Mr J Poplawski	Head of Year 8
Mrs L Bailey	Head of Year 9
Mrs S Pestell	Progress leader – Lower School
Mr M Sellers	Head of Year 10
Mrs H Weller	Head of Year 11
Mrs V Dodson	Progress Leader – Upper School
Mrs P Bamber	Head of Year 12
Mrs Z Farina	Head of Year 13
Mrs A Bell	Progress Leader – Sixth Form
Mrs C Bilbie	6th Form Administrator
Mrs P Walker	6 th Form Administrator (Fridays)
Mrs L Monk	Pastoral Support Worker and Attendance Officer
Mrs E Williams	Safeguarding Assistant
Ms G Sellors	School Nurse

Attendance Statement

Background

1. The last Ofsted Inspection [September 2008] stated, "Attendance remains excellent". Attendance was judged to be Grade 1.

Attendance figures 11-16

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>% Attendance</u>	<u>% Authorised Absence</u>	<u>% Unauthorised Absence</u>
2015-2016	96.44	3.25	0.29
2016-2017	96.60	3.2	0.31
2017-2018	95.8	3.8	0.4
2018-2019	95.6	4.2	0.2
2019-March 2020	95.6	4.0	0.4

Attendance Figures 16-18 Sixth Form

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>% Attendance</u>	<u>% Authorised Absence</u>	<u>% Unauthorised Absence</u>
2015-2016	94.8	4.7	1.0
2016-2017	94.7	4.9	0.4
2017-2018	94.9	4.4	0.7
2018-2019	93.2	5.9	0.9
2019-March 2020	94.5	5.0	0.5

Policy Statement

The Ecclesbourne School is committed to working co-operatively and effectively with all students, parents, staff and relevant agencies to ensure the best possible attendance levels and lowest unauthorised absence rate for all its students.

Procedure

- All major presentations to parents stress the importance of good attendance.
- Heads of year and form tutors stress the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Form tutors are responsible for ensuring that absence notes are received from all students following absence.
- Students who do not bring a note are punished by the tutor [e.g. verbal reprimand, set of lines]
- PLT members to monitor attendance, unexplained absences, punctuality at weekly meetings regarding persistent unexplained absence and those where attendance seems to be an issue.
- The parents of any students who have not brought notes to explain an absence are contacted by letter requesting explanation which is issued by the attendance officer after direction from Head of Year.
- The parents of any students whose attendance is a cause of concern will also be contacted by letter.
- Heads of year analyse attendance patterns for their year group on a weekly basis as part of the PLT meeting.
- Deputy Head teacher/Heads of school analyse attendance patterns for their areas of the school weekly at PLT meetings.
- Deputy Head Teacher /Learning Services has overall view of school attendance.
- 100% attendance certificates presented in year assembly termly, annual 100% attendance cinema vouchers presented in whole school assemblies. Two-years full attendance (Y7 and Y8) to receive prize during Lower School Prize Giving, Three-year full attendance to receive prize during Upper School Prize Giving.

Review Date: Oct 2021

Responsibility: Deputy Head Teacher – Lower School

