

The Elton High School

Promoting Good Attendance Policy

This model policy is based on the DfE's ['Working together to improve attendance'](#) guidance (February 2024).

September 2024

The Elton High School

Policy for Promoting Good Attendance

Date: October 14th 2024

Signed:

Date of Review: September 2025

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Expectations.....	4
3. Daily routines	5
4. Reporting Absence.....	6
5. Requesting leave of absence	6
6. Managing Attendance	7
7. Voluntary support, formal support and statutory action.....	10
8. Fixed penalty notices.....	12

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At The Elton High School we expect all students to:
- Attend every school day
 - Attend school punctually
 - Attend school prepared for the day
- 1.2 We believe that attending school, on time, is key to enabling children to make the most of the opportunities we offer to prepare them for their future.
- 1.3 We will work in partnership with our families to identify the reasons for poor attendance, supporting them in addressing any barriers to attendance for their child.
- 1.4 Promoting good attendance is a matter for the whole school community. This policy sets out our expectations and our approach. Our approach is in line with the Department for Education's guidance (February 2024) [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)
- 1.5 This policy takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equalities Act 2010 and the 1996 Education Act.
- 1.6 Our approach to securing good attendance is based on the principle of support first. In line with Ofsted's research, our approach can be summarised as 'Listen, understand, empathise and support – but do not tolerate.'
- 1.7 Every student should be able to learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers.
- 1.8 In the case of specific illnesses that require students to be kept off school, parents should follow public health advice to ensure the wellbeing of the whole school community. These illnesses are Chickenpox, Diarrhoea and Vomiting, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, Scabies, Scarlet Fever and Whooping Cough – see '[How long should you keep your child off school – checklist poster](#)'.
- 1.9 This policy will be applied consistently and fairly. In applying this policy, we will take into account the needs of individual students.
- 1.10 This policy is supported by other school policies and procedures e.g., admissions, safeguarding and child protection, anti-bullying, behaviour and inclusive practice.

2. Expectations

- 2.1 It is our responsibility to maintain a culture that promotes good attendance which is supported by consistently applied systems.
- 2.2 Our dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance is Mrs C A Johnson (johnsonc@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk)
- 2.3 Other staff in school who support attendance on a day to day basis are Mrs J Robey (attendance officer robeyj@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk) and Mrs J Marsden (attendance administrator marsdenj@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk)
- 2.4 Staff who can provide support on attendance are as above. However the first point of reference for every student and parent should be the form tutor.
- 2.5 Parents/ carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- 2.6 We are committed to working with parents to promote positive attendance. We expect all our **parents** to:
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
 - Contact the school as soon as possible if your child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence and the expected date of return. This should be followed up with a written note as soon as possible
 - Avoid unnecessary absences. For example, pre-planned medical/ dental appointments should take place outside of school hours.
 - Inform us of any change in circumstances that may impact on your child's attendance.
 - Support us by being involved in your child's education, acknowledging the value of education and the importance of children receiving the same messages from home and school
 - Work with us to address any barriers to attendance for your child including attending all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.
- 2.6.1 We expect all our **students** to:
- Be aware of when they should attend school

- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn
- Speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- Communicate with parents/ carers to encourage a written explanation to be shared with school to explain any absence that has happened or is foreseen
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late

3 Daily routines

- 3.1 At The Elton High School] our form tutors meet and greet our students in assembly/form time each morning. Students are expected to be in school before 8.40am.
- 3.2 Attendance registers are taken at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session.
- 3.3 Our school day begins at 8.40am. The morning register will open and be taken at 8.45am. Any student arriving after 8.45am is required to report to the main school office to sign in and provide a valid reason for lateness
- 3.4 If arrival is before 9.15am then the student will be recorded as late (Late **before** the close of register) and will be given a breaktime detention with their Learning Coordinator.
- 3.5 The school register will officially close at 9.15am. Any student arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session (Late **after** the close of register). Student arriving late will be given a break or lunch detention.
- 3.6 Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in further action being taken to support improved attendance
- 3.7 Our afternoon session begins at 12.20pm with a register taken at 12.20pm
- 3.8 Our normal school day ends at 3.10pm

4 Reporting Absence

- 4.1 If a child is absent from school, parents should contact main reception ((0161 763 1434 or attendance@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk) on the first day of absence providing a reason for the absence and the expected date of return.
- 4.2 If the absence continues, parents should contact school **each day of absence** to identify the reason for absence and the expected date of return.
- 4.3 Where absence is recorded as unexplained, a reason for the absence must be obtained, in writing, by no later than 5 school days after the session.
- 4.4 If a child is absent, and we have had no contact from the parent to provide a reason for the absence, we will:
- Activate first day calling procedures after the register is closed. This will be a text message for parents to respond to.
 - If we cannot contact a parent and are concerned about the student then, a home visit will be carried out by our attendance officer, Mrs J Robey. If the family is supported by a social worker then the social worker will be informed of the absence.
- 4.5 If we have concerns around a student's safety, we will also visit the home of the student or request a welfare check to be made by the police.
- 4.6 We will telephone home if a student leaves school without permission.
- 4.7 Where a child remains absent for 3 or more days we will carry out a home visit as part of our safeguarding and welfare checks to speak to the parent and check on the wellbeing of the child.

5. Requesting leave of absence

- 5.1 A leave of absence will only be granted (authorised) under exceptional circumstances. In making our decision we will take into account the specific circumstances and context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the length of the time the student can be away from school. Requests for a leave of absence should be made in writing giving as much notice as possible. An requests for a leave of absence should be completed on this <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V6be8S1cypZzftbX6Kkp2jzPOZR30GeA/edit?usp=sharing&oid=115797405507743211905&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation will not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

5.2 Any leave in term time that is recorded as unauthorised will be forwarded to the Bury LA for statutory action and you may be requested to provide evidence of your flight dates, holiday booking confirmation or itinerary to evidence details of the leave of absence. (<https://www.bury.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-attendance-exclusions-and-community-education-team/holidays-in-term-time>).

6 Managing Attendance

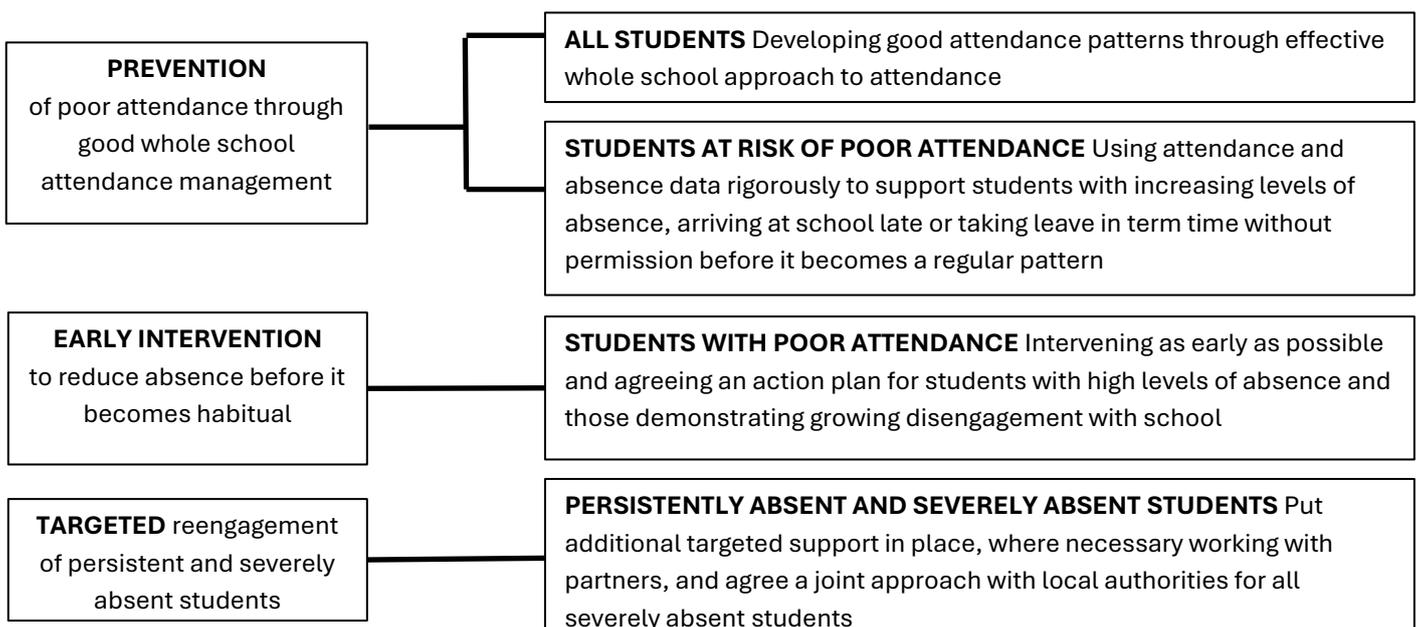
6.1 We will regularly inform parents about their child’s attendance, highlighting any amount of time missed and the impact on learning. Parents can monitor their child’s attendance via Satchel One.

6.2 We value and recognise the importance of good attendance. We use the following to promote and celebrate good attendance:

- Termly rewards for students with outstanding attendance
- Trips for students with positive attitudes to school
- Annual Attendance Rewards for those with outstanding or improved attendance

6.3 We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify students who have consistently high attendance, those who have shown improvements in their attendance and to identify students who may be vulnerable (see 6.4 below). We will also analyse specific groups, classes, year groups to inform our strategy in promoting good attendance.

6.4 Our approach to attendance management is based on prevention, early intervention and targeted support. We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify students who are at risk of poor attendance, have poor attendance or are identified as being either persistently absent or severely absent.



6.5 Our strategy for using data to target our work on attendance, including reducing persistent absence (students who are absent for 10% or more sessions) and severe absence (students who are absent for 50% or more sessions) is based on the table below:

0 – 4 days missed across the school year	98 – 100% attendance	PREVENTION Whole school approach/ celebrating good attendance	[Schools to add own commentary]
5 – 9 days missed across the school year	95– 97.9% attendance	PREVENTION Students at risk of poor attendance	[Schools to add own commentary]
10– 19 days missed across the school year	90.1 –94.9% attendance	EARLY INTERVENTION Students with poor attendance	[Schools to add own commentary]
20 or more days missed across the school year	90% or below attendance	PERSISTENTLY ABSENT 10% or more absence SEVERELY ABSENT 50% or more absence	[Schools to add own commentary]

- 6.6 We will regularly analyse attendance data to identify students or cohorts of students that need support. We will focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- 6.7 If we have concerns about a student’s attendance and/ or their punctuality then we will work in partnership with parents to support improvements. This may involve a meeting in school to support the family in identifying, and addressing, the barriers to attending school and/ or attending school on time.
- 6.8 We recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties and trauma in a child’s life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child’s attendance, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help us to identify any additional support that may be needed. It is expected that the child and their family work collaboratively with us to identify the most appropriate support.
- 6.9 We recognise that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee students and looked after children.

- 6.10 We will hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable to discuss attendance at, and engagement with, school. This will include students who are classed as being persistently absent (10% or more absence), those who are severely absent (50% or more absence), those with patterns of absence and students who show an unexpected or unexplained dip in attendance.
- 6.11 Working with parents, we will identify students who need support from wider partners and will make the necessary referrals as quickly as possible. With parental consent, this may include exploring Early Help support through the completion of the 'Story So Far' assessment.
- 6.12 We will support students back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- 6.13 If we have any concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of a student then, in line with our safeguarding policy and procedures, we will make any necessary referrals.
- 6.14 If a student does not attend school and hasn't been seen for a number of days, it is the school's duty to find out why and to ensure that the young person is safe from harm. Home visits can be vital in supporting young people's wellbeing. This is irrespective of whether parents / carers have contacted school or not. Where we cannot contact parents of absent students we may have to follow "the Right Care, Right Person approach" (by approaching MASH multiagency safeguarding hub for advice on next steps).

7. Voluntary support, formal support and statutory action

- 7.1 We will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. These may include:
- A recognised whole school approach that celebrates achievement in school
 - Reward systems for positive behaviours
 - Discussion with parents and students
 - Discussion with the Virtual School where the child is looked after and/ or has a social worker
 - Working with attendance professionals, internal and/ or external to the school
 - Attendance panels
 - Attendance support plans
 - Attendance report cards
 - Attendance Contracts

- Referrals to support agencies
- Learning mentors
- Student Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- Personal, social and health education
- Anxiety-based school avoidance resources
- Trauma-informed approaches
- Early help referral options
- Family learning
- Reward systems
- Time limited part-time timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion resources
- Reintegration support packages

7.2 Support offered to families, both internally and externally, will be child-centred, trauma informed and inclusive; planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and students.

7.3 Our approach to attendance management is based on the principles of prevention, early intervention and targeted support. At all stages we aim to work in partnership with parents/ carers to address any barriers to attendance and/ or punctuality together. Where support is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects students' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

7.4 We will work with Bury local authority to use the full range of legal interventions available to us to protect our students' right to an education. These are:

- Attendance contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices (see section 8)

7.5 Decisions on which intervention to take will be made on a case-by-case basis after considering the individual circumstances of the family.

8 Fixed penalty notices

- 8.1 School and the local authority will have regard to our safeguarding duties as set out in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.
- 8.2 Fixed penalty notices will be served on parents as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure that their child regularly attends the school. Fixed penalty notices will be used where the student's absence has not been authorised by the school and the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence/s, which should usually be the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the student's attendance.
- 8.3 We will only use a fixed penalty notice, in line with the Working Together to Improve School Attendance National Framework (February 2024), where support to secure regular attendance has not been successful. Fixed penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised holiday in term time.
- 8.4 Fixed penalty notices can be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion the days that the child must not be present in a public place.

Note: This policy meets the requirements of the department for education's [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and referenced the statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties governing school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (and 2024 amendment)

This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, our school's child protection and safeguarding policy and our school's behaviour policy.