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Company Registration Number: 10745840 (England and Wales)

Elements Academy

Attendance Policy for Pupils

September 2023



Nurturing inclusive learning communities





1	Summary	Elements Academy Attendance Policy for Pupils			
2	Responsible person	Jenna Gladwin			
3	Accountable ELT member	Victoria Woo	odrow		
4	Applies to	Elements Academy Pupils			
5	Trustees and/or individuals who have overseen development of this policy	N/A			
6	Headteachers/Service Heads who were consulted and have given approval (if applicable)	Safeguarding and Attendance Network			
7	Equality impact analysis completed	Policy Screened	Y/N	Template completed	Y/N
8	Ratifying committee(s) and date of final approval	APRC			
9	Version	1.2			
10	Available on	Every	Y/ N	Trust Website Academy Website Staff Portal	¥/N Y/ N ¥/N
11	Related documents (if applicable)	Rotherham Early Help Attendance Matters Documents			
12	Disseminated to	Elements Academy staff, parents/carers and pupils			
13	Date of implementation (when shared)	September 2023			
14	Date of next formal review	September 2024			
15	Consulted with Recognised Trade Unions	N/A			
16	Adopted by Ethos Academy Trust following consultation	N/A			



Date	Version	Action	Summary of changes
Sept 23	1.2		Rotherham Early Help Attendance Matters documents added. Flowchart updated to reflect current practice.

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1. School Attendance, Absence and the Law

At Elements 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. Our pupils are valued and are missed when they are absent or late. Through the principles of nurture, positive staff/pupil relationships are developed and each individual is an important part of our school community.

The law requires parents to make sure their children receive full-time education suitable to their needs. As a last resort, schools and the Local Authority (LA) have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

This policy is written with due regard to the revised 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities. (September 2022)

Any absence is detrimental for pupils and will impact on their school experience. Elements Academy will always work with pupils and parents/carers 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. Parents/carers are encouraged to speak with staff from the academy to ensure we are working together to address any issues. If we are concerned, we will work with the family and partner agencies to find a solution that secures improved attendance. In very rare cases we, may have to take the decision to pursue persistent absence through a legal route. We will take all appropriate steps to avoid this but it may be used as a last resort.

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

Elements Academy will pay due regard to the Education Act of 1996 and its further amendments. Since **September 2015** persistent absence (PA) data includes all pupils whose attendance is 90% or less.

The DfE and Ofsted continue to have a sharp focus on persistent absence as there is a direct link between persistent absence from school, poor attainment and 'not in employment, education or training' (NEET) status.



2. Attendance expectations and daily routines

All schools are required to record details of pupils' attendance and absence. They do so at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions:

- The school day starts at 9am and finishes at 14.30;
- Morning registration is between 9 9.20, registers will be closed at 9.30;
- Pupils are registered in their base groups by staff;
- Afternoon registration is between 12.45 13.00, registers will close at 13.00;
- Pupils are registered in their afternoon lesson by staff;

If a child arrives after registers close, they be marked with an L code.

If a child is absent, parents/carers should inform the academy of the reason for the absence. Elements 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. The DfE also receives annually the overall data for Elements Academy.

If a child is absent, parents/carers should contact the academy to provide a reason for absence. All calls and communications will be appropriately recorded by the academy. If the academy has not received contact, Family Support will attempt to make contact by 10.00. If contact cannot be made, a home visit will be carried out. See appendix A.

The following codes are used to record types of absence:

- B Educated off-site
- T Traveller absence
- 0 Unauthorised absence
- / Present
- N No reason given
- H Agreed family holiday
- G Family holiday, not agreed
- C Other authorised circumstances
- I Illness
- E Exclusion
- V Educational trip
- Y Enforced closure
- R Religious observance
- # School closed to pupils
- S Study leave
- W Work experience
- P Sporting activity

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Head to ensure that registers are completed correctly. This responsibility may be delegated to the business support, with the monitoring and oversight from the Assistant Head.



3. Our Responsibilities as an Academy

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

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Continually monitor and implement policies and strategies that support consistent school attendance;
- 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;
- Implement reward systems that motivate pupils to attend well;
- Support colleagues with systems that are accessible and ensure positive outcomes;
- Plan a balanced and engaging curriculum that meets individual need and enables change, where necessary, through a strong focus on relationships and personal motivation;
- Embed positive working relationships with partner agencies and ensure that communication is timely and effective;
- Plan a programme of celebration events where pupils' achievements are recognised and parents/carers and wider stakeholders are included;
- Report regularly to the CEO and Trust board.

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 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 parents/carers and other professionals;
- Reward good and improved attendance in a fair and equitable way ensuring parents/carers are informed.



4. Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

- Inform school of any circumstances that may impact on attendance;
- 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;
- Communicate regularly with school staff, informing them of any change in circumstance that may affect your child's attendance;
- Make medical or other appointments out of school time, unless unavoidable;
- Work with staff to implement agreed strategies and actively promote good attendance.

What we will do if a pupil does not attend

- In case of absence, we will contact parents/carers by phone and if this is not possible, a home visit will be arranged. Any concerns will be passed to the relevant services, ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed.
- Elements Academy staff 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 absence continues, the pupil will be raised at the weekly attendance and safeguarding meeting. At this point, we would implement the Early Help Attendance Pathway and continue to monitor. The pupil's provision may also be reviewed at this time.

5. Persistent Absence (PA)

• The Government identifies persistent absence as any pupil who has attendance of less than 90%. Elements 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. Elements Academy will put into place all reasonable measures to secure and sustain improved attendance.

6. The Importance of Good Attendance

At Elements Academy, we have high expectations for our pupils and as such the expected attendance standard is 95%. 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 to find solutions and promote the benefits of good attendance, rather than implementing a punitive response.



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

- 90% attendance = $\frac{1}{2}$ 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?
- 17 missed school days mean that secondary school pupils could drop a whole GCSE grade.

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 provide a healthy breakfast at our school and we know that this starts the day positively and pupils can then focus and learn. If a 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 are ready to learn.

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.

7. Attendance Rewards

At Elements 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 include:

- Regular postcards and phone calls home to ensure parents/carers are kept informed;
- Half termly reward assemblies. This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate success as a whole school;
- Promoting competition by comparing the attendance of the groups and rewarding the winning group;
- Termly reward trips 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.



8. Leave of absence requests

Requesting leave during term time will affect a child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to help us by not taking pupils out of school in term time. The current law does not give any entitlement to parents/carers to take their child out of school during term time. Any application for leave must be in writing to the Head Teacher and only be made in exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parent/carers can be fined for taking their child out of school during term time, without consent from the academy.

9. Children at risk of missing in education

All pupils at risk of CME are reported to the local authority in line with relevant guidance within agreed timescales.

10. Strategy for reducing severe or persistent absence

We implement a 5-stage programme to encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality. The programme supports parents/carers to improve their child's attendance.

Stage 1

Work with group staff to identify barriers that can be easily removed. If there are no improvements in attendance, this indicates that further interventions are required and therefore we move to stage 2.

Stage 2

Home visits by Family Support or the attendance officer are carried out to agree strategies to improve attendance. If there are no improvements in attendance, this indicates that further interventions are required and therefore we move to stage 3.

Stage 3

Meeting 1

This meeting will require parents/carers and the pupil to meet with a senior leader. An action plan will be put into place for an agreed period of time and outcomes will be measured and recorded. If there are no improvements in attendance, this indicates that further interventions are required and therefore we move to stage 4.

Stage 4

Meeting 2

This meeting will require parents/carers and the pupil to meet with the Head Teacher. A final action plan will be agreed for a period of time and outcomes will be measured and recorded. Processes for prosecution will be discussed



Stage 5

Processes required for prosecution will be implemented, including the involvement of appropriate agencies.

Prosecution will be authorised by the Head Teacher if appropriate evidence supports this

11. Pupils on Personalised Timetables

At Elements Academy all staff at the academy have responsibility for the care of pupils who are struggling to access learning. We recognise however, that at certain stages in a pupil'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 pupil is appropriately supported within our usual systems, there are occasions when they will still struggle to access full time education. In these instances, the Senior Leadership Team may consider that a personalised timetable is an appropriate means of supporting the pupil up until the point when they are better able to access full time education.

Examples of when this is appropriate may include:

- · At transition points into or between settings
- \cdot When the pupil has repeated or prolonged episodes of crisis

 \cdot 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 academy day

 \cdot When their behaviour causes repeated and significant disruption to the education of other pupils.

If the Senior Leadership Team considers a personalised timetable is appropriate, a clear plan for this should be completed. This plan and the reasons for it, will be communicated to parents/carers along with the arrangements for its regular review. The aim of a personalised timetable will always be to support the pupil so that they can return to full time education as soon as possible. The duration will however, depend on the needs of the individual. When pupils attend the academy on a Personalised timetable, they shall be marked present (/) only for the sessions that they attend – i.e., morning or afternoon. If they are not required to attend a session, this will be marked with the C code.

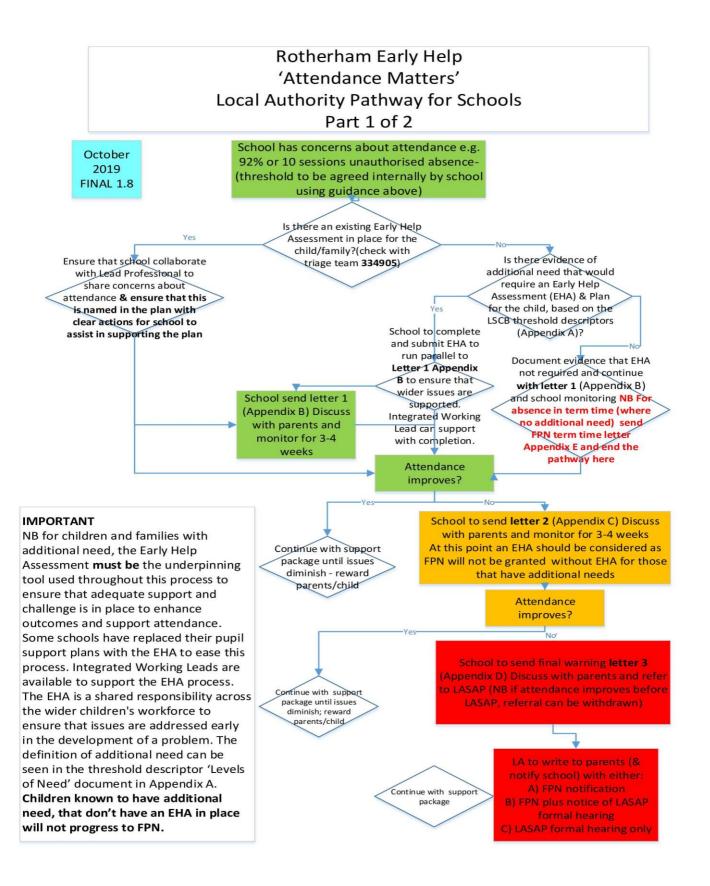


Appendix A Elements Academy Attendance Flow Chart Stage 1: First day of absence Contact not made: entered onto CPOMS and Contact made: Phone contact made to text message sent to parent/carers asking parent/carers by school and contact them to contact school. If no further contact entered onto CPOMS. If no reason for is made a home visit will be conducted. absence, arrangements made to collect pupil. Stage 2: Second day of absence Any pupils working with social care agencies contact will be made to the worker or MASH if parents are not contactable. Contact made: Phone contact made to parent/carers by school and contact Contact not made: further text message sent. entered onto CPOMS. If no reason for Second home visit made by DDSL. absence, arrangements made to collect pupil. Any pupils working with social care agencies Stage 3: Further absence - contact will be made to the worker or MASH if parents are not contactable.

Daily phone calls to update. If the reason for absence is unclear or concern then arrangements to be made for pupil to be brought in to school. After 5 days absence regardless of phone contact it may be necessary to make a home visit as a welfare check and refer to external agencies. Review of whether the provision is working for the pupil and address any issues.



Appendix B





School Address

Contact details

Date

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

NAME OF CHILD: DATE OF BIRTH: REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

I am writing to you to share my concern regarding the attendance of your child, (insert child's name.)

(Insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Whilst occasionally, absence may have been due to illness, school are concerned that on occasion, there has been a lack of satisfactory evidence provided to explain the absence.

School and the Local Authority are keen that families who experience difficulties are supported in order to help make improvements with issues that are affecting family life and that can result in poor attendance. Support is available for families through the Early Help Assessment and Plan. This is a process that helps professionals understand the issues that may be affecting the child and family and plan appropriate support to help. We recognise that family life can at times be difficult and sometimes families' need a helping hand to assist.

It is, however, important to note that **enforcement action may be taken if an improvement in attendance is not made**. In light of this, we are keen to offer support and we hope that you take up this offer. If there is not a marked improvement in (insert child's name) attendance at school, the matter will be reported to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) with a view to seeking enforcement as per the provisions of the Education Act (1996.) If LASAP make the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice (fine) you will be informed by letter and will be given 21 days to pay. If LASAP make the decision that there will be an FPN (fine) and there are sufficient concerns that warrant further action, your child's case will be brought formally to LASAP and you (and your child where appropriate) will be invited to attend.

It is important that you take this information seriously and act in the best interests of your child to ensure future good attendance.

If you need to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert head teachers name)

NB contact name above may be different but the letter must be signed by the head teacher

School Attendance Matters Pathway Letter 1



School Address

Contact details

Date

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FORMAL WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

NAME OF CHILD: DATE OF BIRTH: REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

Despite writing to you on (insert date of letter 1) I am writing to you again to outline my concerns due to the ongoing unsatisfactory attendance of your child (insert child's name.)

I must emphasise the duty that is imposed by the Education Act (1996) upon parents/carers, to ensure that children of school age attend school every time it is open, unless the children are prevented from doing so as a result of their own illness. In the case of illness, medical evidence should always be submitted.

(Insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

The explanations given by you, for your child's absences, are not considered to be reasonable within the provision of the Education Act. I must, therefore, advise you that unless there is an **immediate and sustained improvement** in your child's attendance at school, I shall be compelled to take further steps in the matter by referring this to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) It is my duty to bring to your attention the penalties which may be imposed via this route by the Magistrates Court in line with the Education Act (1996), namely:

"Any person guilty of an offence against Section 444 of this Act" (these are the sections of the Act relating to compulsory school attendance) "shall be liable on summary conviction, in the case of a first or subsequent offence against that section, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months."

I must also point out that one of the actions from LASAP could be an Education Supervision Order imposed by the Family Court; which gives the Local Authority discretion to intervene with a family when attendance is very concerning. This means that you and your child will be required to follow directions that are outlined in the order imposed by Court and will be expected to work closely with a professional from the Local Authority.

School and the Local Authority are keen that families who experience difficulties are supported in order to help make improvements with issues that are affecting family life and that can result in poor attendance. Support is available for families through the Early Help Assessment and Plan. This is a process that helps professionals understand the issues that may be affecting the child and family and plan appropriate support to help. We recognise that family life can at times be difficult and sometimes families' need support to assist.

It is, however, important to note that **enforcement action will be taken if an immediate improvement in attendance is not made**. In light of this, we are keen that you take up the offer of support if you have not already done so. This warning is issued in the hope that there will be no necessity to take further steps to enforce the law. However, you are warned that if you do not immediately address your child's attendance and ensure that they attend school regularly, the actions above will be implemented.

School Attendance Matters Pathway Letter 2



2

If LASAP make the decision to issue a fixed penalty notice (fine) you will be informed by letter and will be given 21 days to pay. If LASAP make the decision that there will be an FPN (fine) and there are sufficient concerns that warrant further action, your child's case will be brought formally to LASAP and you (and your child where appropriate) will be invited to attend.

I should be pleased if you would give your immediate attention to this matter, and if you have any queries regarding this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert head teachers name)

NB contact name above may be different but the letter must be signed by the head teacher



School Address

Contact details

Date

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: FINAL WARNING TO PARENTS/CARERS

NAME OF CHILD: DATE OF BIRTH: REGISTERED PUPIL AT: (insert)

Dear (insert parent/carer name)

Despite writing to you twice previously (insert date of letter 1 and letter 2) I find it necessary to write to you a final letter to re-emphasise my concerns due to the ongoing, serious nature of your child's (insert child's name) poor attendance.

As previously stated, I must reaffirm the duty that is imposed by the Education Act (1996) upon parents/carers, to ensure that children of school age attend school every time it is open, unless the children are prevented from doing so as a result of their own illness. In the case of illness, medical evidence should always be submitted.

(Insert child's name) attendance is currently (insert attendance %) and the school are concerned as this is unsatisfactory. The Local Authority and School together take attendance very seriously and have strong evidence that children who attend regularly are much more likely to achieve positive outcomes and perform well in school and achieve in later life.

During the period (enter dates) (insert child's name) has been absent from school for (enter figure) out of a possible (enter figure) half day sessions.

Despite contacting you twice previously your child's attendance has remained concerning.

The explanations given by you, for your child's absences, are not considered to be reasonable within the provision of the Education Act. I must, therefore, advise you that I am now compelled to take further steps in this matter by referring this to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) It is my duty to bring to your attention the penalties which may be imposed via this route by the Magistrates Court in line with the Education Act (1996), namely:

"Any person guilty of an offence against Section 444 of this Act" (these are the sections of the Act relating to compulsory school attendance) "shall be liable on summary conviction, in the case of a first or subsequent offence against that section, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months."

I must also point out that one of the actions from LASAP could be an Education Supervision Order imposed by the Family Court; which gives the Local Authority discretion to intervene with a family when attendance is very concerning. This means that you and your child will be required to follow directions that are outlined in the order imposed by Court and will be expected to work closely with a professional from the Local Authority.

It is extremely important to note that enforcement action will now be taken.

In the event of a fixed penalty notice (fine) being issues, the Local Authority will write to you with details of when and how to pay. This will be followed up with further contact to discuss how future attendance will be addressed swiftly.

If, in addition to the above, it is agreed that the case needs to be heard by LASAP the Local Authority will contact you with the date and time to attend LASAP.

School Attendance Matters Pathway Letter 3 FINAL LETTER 2.1



2

I should be pleased if you would give your immediate attention to this matter, and if you have any queries regarding this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Insert head teachers name)

NB contact name above may be different but the letter must be signed by the head teacher



Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Agreement with Parents/Carers and other agencies

This is an Agreement between:

(1) (2) (3) (4)
Child's name: D.o.b.:
School:
Problem:
This agreement is intended to achieve the following:
What will be done by each party to this agreement? (as above):
(indicate timescales as appropriate – <u>when</u> will things be done?)
This agreement is will be reviewed at
If anyone wants to change this agreement they will discuss this with
all parties in the agreement.
If anyone feels the agreement is not being kept they will report the
issues to Vicky Woodrow (Head Teacher).
If this agreement breaks down the following action will be taken: An

Any further issues/arrangements: (e.g. rewards for success) will be recorded and rewards issued by both staff and parents.

Discussions will take place between school and home on a regular basis Person responsible for review: Jason Yule Tel: 01909 212231 Where Everyone Matters
We consent to this agreement and understand what it means:

(1)	signed

(2) signed

(3) signed

(3) Vicky Woodrow (Head Teacher)

Date: