

ERASMUS DARWIN ACADEMY

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“Erasmus Darwin Academy promotes the safeguarding and welfare of children in its care; all policies support the “Safeguarding Policy”.

1. Aims and Principles

At Erasmus Darwin Academy we are committed to ensuring that every student receives the best educational experience possible by offering a calm, orderly, safe and supportive learning environment where they want to be on every day that school is open to them. We also recognise the link between attendance, academic achievement, wellbeing and wider life choices. We understand that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual students and families. We believe that promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community and we work closely with families as well as other partners to address attendance concerns and put the right support in place to ensure excellent attendance and punctuality at school.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents have decided to have their child registered at Erasmus Darwin Academy, they have a legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly and agree to work with us in line with our attendance policy. This means they will ensure their child attends every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the Academy.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and we recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. Attendance and punctuality is an integral part of our culture and ethos at Erasmus Darwin Academy. We set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students. For the most vulnerable students, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Whilst every student has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations are set for all students, our attendance policy and procedures account for the specific needs of certain students and student cohorts. Our policy and procedures will be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so we consider the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. We will work in line with our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Regular school attendance is important in order for students to reach their full potential. Evidence suggests that there is a clear link between attendance and attainment. According to national research, students with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS4, students not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 41. The overall absence rate of students not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).

Ref:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/the-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-ks2-and-ks4/2018-19>

Attendance levels can sometimes be regarded in the same way as examination results. In an examination 80% would be a very positive result. In attendance terms that would mean that a student missed 40 days of education; 1 day a week. Therefore, if attendance remains at 80% for the whole of the student's secondary education they will miss more than a full year of education.

Days off soon add up – as does the impact of ‘lost learning’, particularly when considered over five school years (from Years 7-11)			
95% attendance over five school years may seem like a positive achievement to some, but this still equates to over nine weeks of lost learning – around one quarter of a school year!			
Attendance	Days lost over 1 year	Hours lost over 1 year (each lesson is 1 hour)	Lost learning over 5 years (Year 7-11)
100%	None	None	None
95%	9.5 days	47.5 hours/lessons	9.5 weeks or 237.5 hours of learning
90%	19 days	95 hours/lessons	19 weeks or 475 hours of learning
85%	28.5 days	142.5 hours/lessons	28.5 weeks or 712.5 hours of learning

At Erasmus Darwin Academy, all students are expected to be at school on time, on every day that the Academy is open to them, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. We will support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. We aim to ensure the highest levels of attendance and punctuality for individuals, in order that every student at Erasmus Darwin Academy can make the most of their educational experience and work towards achieving their full potential. Poor attendance can limit these opportunities and may place students at risk.

Our Academy aims to meet its obligations with regards to attendance by:

- Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality and reducing absence, including persistent absence by creating a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Engage and build strong relationships with families to ensure clear expectations of the legal responsibility for their child to attend school regularly and on time to maintain continuity of learning as outlined in this attendance policy.
- Ensure prompt and effective communication when attendance levels fall.
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Keep electronic records of attendance and take prompt action to follow up absences or any patterns forming which may indicate some concerns or difficulties.
- Closely monitoring all students' attendance and punctuality, having effective day to day processes in place, highlighting and addressing any issues by working with staff, parents/carers and where appropriate other agencies to bring about improvement.

2. Legislation and Guidance

The definition of a parent for the purposes of the Education Acts is broadly drawn. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this policy include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) with whom the child lives.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education

Relevant legislation

The Education Act 1996 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444>
The Children Act 1989 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents>
The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/38/contents>
The Education and Inspections Act 2006 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>
The Sentencing Act 2020 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/17/contents/enacted>
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>
The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/1869/contents/made>
The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/1867/contents/made>

Relevant government/local authority guidance

Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>
Working together to improve school attendance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
Children missing education - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>
Keeping children safe in education - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
Working together to safeguard children - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
Elective home education - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>
Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>
Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>
Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges>
Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Key points from this policy:

- At Erasmus Darwin Academy we recognise the link between attendance, academic achievement, wellbeing and wider life choices which is why we strive for every student to maintain 100% attendance.
- Students are expected to be punctual and arrive in to school by 8.35am every day that the Academy is open to them.
- It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time. Failure to do this may result in legal action being taken by the local authority.
- Students with less than 90% attendance are classed as being persistent absentees in line with government guidelines and this is a cause for concern.
- It is very unlikely that any request for leave of absence for a family holiday will be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- If your child is experiencing barriers to attending school, you are encouraged to discuss this with us at your earliest opportunity so that we can work together to support and/or address the issue.
- If your child is going to be absent from school because of illness, you must inform us by 8.40am on every day of absence. If your child has an appointment which means they will miss part of the school day, we ask for evidence of the appointment in advance so that we can code this accurately on our registers.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires us to work closely with families and local partners, not against families. Erasmus Darwin Academy follows the latest government guidelines on school attendance and we believe that all partners should work together to:

MONITOR

We will rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve concerns before they become entrenched.

EXPECT

We aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, we will discuss with students and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

We will address barriers in school and help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome any barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work together with families to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through the local authority, a parenting contract or education supervision order.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work closely with the local authority to enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.

Keep in contact

If you or your child have any concerns in relation to school attendance, we encourage you to make contact with us at the earliest opportunity so that we can discuss this further.

Parents can contact the Academy and request to speak to a member of staff about their concerns at any time, someone will get back to you if not available at the time. Your child's Tutor should be the first point of contact, however, parents can also contact their child's teacher, Head of House or for more daily attendance specific concerns email attendance@eda.staffs.sch.uk which will be directed to our Attendance team.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the Academy of the reason for a student's absence by 8.40am or as soon as possible on the day of absence. Parents are asked to inform the academy on the first day of absence and to keep us fully informed as to the reasons for non-attendance on every day thereafter. On the first day of an absence, we will send a message either by text or via the app to the parent, if they have not contacted the school to explain the reason for the absence.

3. Academy Procedures – Admissions Register

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. By law, schools (except those where all students are boarders) are required to keep an admissions and attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

3.1 Admissions Register (The school roll)

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) contains specific personal details of every student in the Academy along with the date of admission or re-admission, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. We will enter students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which we have agreed with, or been notified by the parent or local authority, that the student will attend. If a student fails to attend on the agreed starting day, we will follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence. In accordance with regulation 12(3), (4) and (5) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, we will notify the local authority within 5 days of adding a student's name to the admission register. This does not apply to students who are added to the admission register at the start of Year 7 unless the local authority requests such information.

3.2 Student Information

Schools must record personal details of every student at the school in the admission register. The register includes the following information for every student:

- full name;
- sex;
- the full name and address of each of the student's parents;
- which of the student's parents the student normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each parent who the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency. In accordance with DfE's advice we request an emergency contact number for more than one person for each student;
- day, month and year of birth;
- day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
- name and address of the school last attended, if any.

A student ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

3.3 Updating personal details

It is a parent's responsibility to keep the Academy informed of any changes to a student's personal details when they occur so that we can amend our admission register as soon as possible. We request that wherever possible, parents provide at least 2 emergency contacts for each student, including more than one contact number where available. It is vital and a parents' responsibility to ensure that these contact details are kept up-to-date so we can make contact when needed. Please ensure all first priority emergency contact mobiles are fully charged and switched on during the school day so we can contact you in the event of your child being absent from school without notification or becoming unwell whilst at school.

3.4 Deletion of names from Admission Register

A student's name will only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended and we will inform the local authority as soon as the student's name is to be deleted. Where a student is transferring to another school, we will delete the student's name from the admission register on the first day they are entered on the admission register of the new school.

3.4.1 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. Deciding to educate your child at home instead of sending them to school is a step which should not be taken lightly and one that we do not encourage. It will mean a major commitment of your time, energy and money. We encourage all parents to discuss this with us before making a final decision so that we can work with you to address any concerns. It is especially important that you as parents consider the nature of the education you intend to provide for your child before you begin to teach at home. It is of upmost importance to consider whether home education is in your child's overall best interests now and in the future, including social development.

A child's name will not be removed from the admissions register until all avenues to support the student to continue with an education in school have been explored. Parents must inform us in writing

that their child will not be returning to the Academy and will be electively home educated so that we can liaise with the local authority.

3.4.2 A student no longer lives a reasonable distance from the school

In circumstances where a student no longer lives a reasonable distance from school (in relation to a child of 8 or above, this means 3 miles and is measured by the nearest available safe route) and parents are withdrawing their child but are unable to say how their child will continue with their education, for example, the family are relocating but have not been able to secure a place at a new school in advance, we will support wherever possible. Once the student has completed their final day at school and moved out of the area and we have exhausted all areas of support, we will delete the student's name from the admission register following advice and guidance from Staffordshire local authority and the student's information will be transferred to the Lost Pupil Database via the S2S system.

3.5 Dual registration

The law allows for a student to be registered at more than one school. In circumstances, where it has been agreed by the Headteacher that a student from Erasmus Darwin Academy will be registered at more than one school, the student's name will remain on our admission register. The main examples of dual registration are student who are attending another school on a temporary basis, such as a pupil referral unit or a hospital school.

4. Attendance Register

All schools, except those where all the pupils are boarders, must keep an attendance register in accordance with regulation 6 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended. At Erasmus Darwin Academy a register is taken within the first 10 minutes of every session, monitoring attendance throughout the day to safeguard our students. We use SIMS to complete our registers in an accurate, timely and effective way which allows us to share and analyse information with appropriate parties. We have a robust day-to-day process to track and follow up absence and poor punctuality which is applied across the Academy. (see appendix 4)

Students must arrive in school by 8.35am on every school day so that they are not late for Registration which is the first official attendance register of the day. The official attendance register will be taken twice per day; morning/am and afternoon/pm session. The am and pm registers are a legal record of attendance which provides the data for individual and whole school attendance figures as well as for Local Authority and census returns. Every school day is made up of two sessions (am and pm). If a student of compulsory school age is absent, every half day of absence has to be classified as either authorised or unauthorised by using the correct attendance code. The Academy will determine whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised, not the parent/carer. On each occasion we will record whether a student is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The am official register is taken at 8.40am which is the start of the first session of each school day. This will be kept open until 9:10am on every day. The register for the second session of the day (pm) will be taken at the start of Period 4 and will be kept open for 20 minutes.

Registers will mark whether every student is:

- present
- late or arriving after the register has been closed

- attending an approved off-site educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
-

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- the original entry
- the amended entry
- the reason for the amendment
- the date on which the amendment was made
- the name/initials of the person who made the amendment.

Our School Day:

Lessons	Timings	Time Length
Arrival to School	All students must be through the Academy gates by 8:35am	
Registration	8:40 - 9:10	30 mins
Period 1	9:10 - 10:10	60 mins
Period 2	10:10 - 11:10	60 mins
Break	11:10 - 11:35	25 mins
Period 3	11:35 - 12:35	60 mins
Period 4	12:35 - 13:35	60 mins
Lunch	13:35 - 14:10	35 mins
Period 5	14:10 - 15:10	60 mins
Extra-Curricular/Intervention	15:10 - 16:10	60 mins (not included in the total hours)
Total Hours per Day		390 mins (6.5 hours)
Total Hours per Week		32.5 hours

4.1 Understanding register codes and types of absence

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

These national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education.

How codes used will affect your child's attendance percentage:

Attendance codes in green will have a positive impact on attendance whereby anything in red will have a negative impact.

ATTENDANCE CODES CODE DESCRIPTION MEANING	Impact on Attendance %
/ - Present (AM) Present	/ Present (AM) Present
\ - Present (PM) Present	\ Present (PM) Present
B - Educated off site - approved Education Activity	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
C - Personal circumstances (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
D - Dual registered	Not counted in possible attendances

E - Excluded (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
F - Extended family holiday (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
G - Family Holiday (Unauthorised)	Impacts on attendance %
H - Family Holiday (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
I - Illness (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
J - Interview Approved Education Activity	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
L - Late (Before 1 st and 2 nd Official register closes)	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
M - Medical/Dental appointments (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
N - No reason provided for absence (Unauthorised)	Impacts on attendance %
O - Unauthorised absence (Unauthorised)	Impacts on attendance %
P - Approved sporting activity	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
R - Religious Observance	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
S - Study Leave (Authorised)	Impacts on attendance %
T - English and Welsh Roma and other traveller absence	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
U - Late after registration closed (Unauthorised)	Impacts on attendance %
V - Educational visit or trip Approved Education Activity	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
W - Work Experience	DOES NOT impact negatively on attendance %
X - Student not expected to be in school	Not counted in possible attendances
Y - Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z - Student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
# - School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances

Even though some absences are authorised, they can still have a negative impact on your child's overall attendance percentage if they are not present for either the morning or afternoon official register. This is why we ask that students are out of school for the shortest time possible and present in school during the taking of the official register.

Parents must inform the Academy about the reason for absence so that the register can be coded accurately. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the Academy (not by parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required prior to the start of the school day and our staff may ask additional questions. Parents should inform the Academy in advance of any planned absences (including medical appointments) and provide evidence where available. When information is received in relation to an absence, the reason is logged on the Academy attendance system and indicated by a red flag on the register.

Authorised absences are defined as mornings or afternoons away from school for a valid reason like illness, medical appointments where evidence has been provided or other unavoidable reasons.

Unauthorised absences are defined as those absences which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation/agreement has been given. This can include but is not limited to:

- Children off school unnecessarily or against the request of Academy staff to attend.
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences that have not been reported properly as per our attendance policy
- Children who arrive to school after the official am or pm session has been closed /too late to get a mark

4.2 Unplanned Absence

Parents/Carers must notify the Academy by 8.40am on the first day of an unplanned absence and for every day of absence following that, for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health or there has been an unforeseen emergency (see also section 4). Parents can contact the Academy using the ConnectED App, via text message, email or by phoning reception.

Absence due to illness or unforeseen circumstances will be authorised unless the Academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the absence. If the authenticity of the absence is in doubt, the Academy may ask parents to provide evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the Academy is not notified or satisfied about the authenticity of the absence, this will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified.

If a student is experiencing barriers or difficulties and attendance is affected, parents/carers should contact the Academy as soon as possible and work together with staff in resolving any problems. Allowing a child to remain at home to avoid issues in school will only prolong the concern. Where help has been offered but a student remains absent from school, this absence will be coded as unauthorised.

4.3 Medical or dental appointments

Medical coding for absence does impact on a student's overall rate of attendance if they miss morning or afternoon registration. The Academy should be informed of absences for medical appointments in advance and should be supported by medical evidence. Medical evidence can take the form of either a name and dated appointment card, compliment slip or electronic reminder, a prescription or proof of prescribed medication relating to the current illness. Advanced notice and evidence of the appointment is required for authorising these absences. If no medical evidence is received, the absence will be unauthorised. We strongly encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible or as early or late in the school day as possible (arrival into school before 9am or leaving school towards the end of Period 5). Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

To notify the Academy of medical appointments, parents can contact reception via the App, text message, email or phone call. Alternatively, parents can ask their child to show an appointment card to our Attendance Officer on Reception.

4.4 Lateness to school and Punctuality to lessons

Arriving on time for school and lessons means that students don't miss out on the sharing of important messages and learning activities. It is very important for children to develop habits of arriving on time so that this life skill is embedded at an early age and serves them well in both academic and professional careers. In school and in nearly every job student's go on to pursue, they will be expected to be punctual, which means no loitering and being on time, every time. Students who arrive late cause disruption and bring unwanted attention to themselves. This is why it is of upmost

importance that students arrive to school by 8.35am, or preferably a few minutes earlier, so that they can be in the right place at the right time to start the day off at 8.40am. Arriving late results in missed learning opportunities.

Minutes late	Days lost per year
5 minutes late each day	3 days lost
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days lost
15 minutes late each day	10 days lost
20 minutes late each day	13 days lost
30 minutes late each day	19 days lost

If there is an unavoidable reason and your child is going to be late for school, we ask that you contact school so that the reason can be recorded and students can be supported upon their arrival where necessary. Students will not receive a sanction for lateness when a parent has made contact with the Academy to explain the unavoidable reason for lateness. We encourage all parents to make contact with the Academy if you are experiencing any difficulties with getting your child to school on time.

Students who are late to school or lessons without a valid reason will be issued with a late mark (L). Students who arrive after the gates have been locked or are repeatedly late to registration or lessons will receive a sanction. (see appendix 3)

Staffordshire guidelines released on 1st January 2018 state that where a school or Academy have concerns with regards to persistent lateness to school, a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

A student who arrives late for no valid reason (after 8.40am) but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L). Our official morning register closes at 9am on every school day. A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent for the time missed, using the appropriate code. If a reason is not provided, the absence will be unauthorised and the student will receive a sanction unless there are exceptional circumstances.

When students arrive late to lessons, it can disrupt the flow of teaching or class discussion, distract others, impede learning, and generally affect the flow of the lesson. A student who arrives late to lesson, after everyone else and without a valid reason will miss out on important information and they will disrupt teaching and learning. Students will be issued with a late mark (L) on the register. An accumulation of late marks throughout the week will result in a sanction being issued (See appendix 3)

It may seem like being a couple of minutes late isn't really that much, but for the typical school day of 6.5 hours, a student who is 10 minutes late every day will miss **30 hours** of school/learning time that year. If a child is 10 minutes late getting to school, it is more like 20 minutes until they are actually learning. The impact on the class as a whole is even larger. If two students are late, one by 3 minutes and one by 6 minutes, then the class is disrupted on more than one occasion and the learning of everyone is affected.

4.5 Following up absence

Parents/carers are expected to contact the Academy by 8.40am when their child is absent to explain the reason. Where a reason has not been provided we will make contact with parents/carers and where appropriate social workers to establish the reason for absence to ensure safeguarding. The Academy will follow up all absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

All N Codes (see Appendix 1) will be followed up on the same day to ensure that all students are accounted for and safe. If no reason is provided for student absence, the absence will not be authorised.

4.6 Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

For the first five school days of any exclusion, parents must ensure that their child of compulsory school age is not in a public place during school hours without very good reason. Parents must also ensure that their child attends any new full-time education provided from the sixth day of exclusion (unless they have arranged suitable alternative education themselves). If your child is found in a public place, you could be prosecuted and fined £60.

4.7 Support students back in to school

Students will be supported back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence. Joined up pastoral care will be provided and it will be decided by a senior leader in the Academy or other professional whether a time-limited phased return to school is appropriate.

5. Leave of Absence requests.

Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable. We understand that on occasions, parents may need to make a request for leave of absence due to an aspirational activity where their child is taking an examination or representing a team. In all cases where leave of absence is being requested, a 'Leave of Absence' form must be completed and returned in advance of the planned leave. Forms are available upon request from the school Reception. A request for leave of absence will not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the student normally lives with **and** we are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, we will determine the number of days a student can be authorised as absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

The Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. DfE Guidance on Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022) states that 'Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. **It is**

unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. If your leave of absence request is unauthorised and your child is then absent on the requested days, you may be liable for a penalty notice issued by Staffordshire County Council.

5.1 Exceptional Circumstances

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as situations that are of sufficient seriousness that the absence can be justified. The Academy considers each application for term-time leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion if it is deemed to be the result of exceptional circumstances

Valid examples of exceptional circumstances which would lead to an **authorised leave of absence** include:

1. Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
2. An absence from school which is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Medical documentation will be required for this, especially if the absence is in the form of a holiday during term-time.
3. The death or terminal illness of a close relative.
4. A parent being service personnel who is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is clearly evidenced that the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
5. Out-of-school events involving music, the arts or sport, where pupils are operating at a club or an elite standard of performance. Documentary evidence of this will be required.
6. Religious observance. The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c) states that a child should not be regarded as having failed to attend school *"on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs"*
7. To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative. (a limited period of leave will only be authorised for a wedding when the Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there will be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is an exceptional circumstance.)
8. Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes. This covers Roma, English and Welsh, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school
9. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 8 above, the Headteacher will make a recommendation/decision based on the extent to which the situation has caused or will cause the pupil or family to suffer acute trauma.

5.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those for which no 'leave' has been granted by the Headteacher. This type of absence can lead to the Academy using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised Absence includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark for registration
- shopping, looking after other children, birthdays or other celebrations
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be absent because they are ill, occasionally some young people may be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the Academy, the parents/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better 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 usually makes things worse. Parents should contact the Academy at the earliest opportunity in relation to any attendance concerns.

5.3 Legal Sanctions and Criteria for Fixed Penalty Notices following Unauthorised Absence

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days (per parent, per child). The payment is made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent/carer or withdraw the notice.

Erasmus Darwin Academy works closely with Staffordshire Local Authority. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. Penalty notices may be issued to any of our compulsory school aged students if one of the following criteria is met:

- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the Headteacher or in excess of the period authorised by the Headteacher (e.g. family holiday). This applies to any G coded period of absence including one-off instances of unauthorised absence such as holidays/leave of absence taken in term time without permission (Each instance will be investigated on a case by case basis)
- Persistent late arrival at school i.e. after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.

- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- A penalty notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

6. Persistent Absence (PA)

Where absence escalates and students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), these students are classed as 'persistent absentees (PA). Those missing 50% or more of school are severely absent students and may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. This group of students are the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan to overcome the barriers to being in school. If all avenues of support have been facilitated by the Academy, other partners and the local. Further information is available in the statutory guidance on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2> Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence daily. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this. PA students are tracked regularly and monitored carefully.

Any PA students and their parents/carers may be subject to an Early Help Assessment (EHA). The EHA may include: allocation of additional support through a mentor, or participation in activities based around raising attendance. The EHA may also include a request for additional support from partner agencies. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the senior leadership team and their tutor.

6.1 Legal Intervention

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Where it is decided to pursue prosecution, only local authorities can prosecute parents.

Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or are not appropriate (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time), the Academy will work with the local authority to initiate attendance legal intervention to formalise support and/or enforce attendance. As absence (other than an unauthorised family holiday) is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, where possible, we will work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that 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. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for students of compulsory school age and decisions are made on an individual case by case basis. The Academy and local authority will decide which parent(s) to involve in attendance legal intervention, but generally this will be all parents who have day to day responsibility for the child.

Erasmus Darwin Academy is in the Staffordshire local authority area. Where a student lives in another local authority (e.g. Walsall Borough), Staffordshire local authority will take the lead in any action to improve attendance because this is the local authority in which your child attends school.

Local authorities have the power to prosecute:

- Parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).
- Parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.
- Parents who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

6.2 Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed penalty notices are served on parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided. Fixed penalty notices can be issued where the student's absence has not been authorised and the absence constitutes an offence. Fixed penalty notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences, which is usually the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the student's attendance. Fixed penalty notices may also 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. Fixed penalty notices will be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and can only be issued by the Headteacher or someone authorised by them (a deputy or assistant head).

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be paid direct to the local authority regardless of who issued the penalty notice. Erasmus Darwin Academy does not receive any monies from penalties paid. If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28 day period, the local authority will decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. Parent(s) can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired, and full payment has not been made. There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

7. Working with families and other partners to ensure good attendance

Attendance is updated daily and accessible to all parents/carers via the MyEd App. Attendance is regularly monitored and staff will work with families to keep them updated about attendance and

absence levels. Parents/carers will be contacted and/or invited in to school to discuss attendance and engagement concerns. We will identify students who we feel need support from wider partners and make referrals where necessary.

Families are encouraged to contact the Academy as soon as any attendance concerns arise. By working together and building positive relationships between home and school, we will gain a better understanding of barriers to attendance and work together to address and remove them. There is a clear link between attendance and attainment, positive outcomes and wider wellbeing and there are sometimes misconceptions amongst families about what 'good' attendance looks like. Students with less than 90% attendance are classed as 'persistent absentees' and the Academy will work closely with students and their parent/carers to improve attendance wherever possible, agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide further support for those students with persistent or severe absence. Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with, we will work with the local authority to put formal support in place. Where barriers to attendance for a student or family are complex and signposting to services is not sufficient, we will work together with other partners to provide more intensive whole family support to address them, especially for severely absent students.

There are a number of ways in which we regularly encourage parents to support their child with regards to attendance:

- encourage your child to be up early enough to have a healthy breakfast before they come to school. Ensure they follow a healthy lifestyle including the appropriate amount of sleep, exercise, relaxation and study.
- ensure that your child arrives punctually with all the equipment/kit they need for the day. If you bring your child to school in the car and traffic is queuing on Pool Road, to prevent students being issued with a late mark, they should be asked to get out and walk instead of waiting to be dropped by the gate. If the weather will have an impact on travel times, extra time should be allowed for preparation as well as the journey to avoid lateness.
- check your child's planner to ensure expectations for the day are met.
- attend parents'/carers' evenings.
- encourage your child, or make contact yourself with school to discuss any issues or concerns sooner rather than later. If our students are happy in school, they will want to attend regularly, will be more successful in their outcomes.

7.1 Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from a diagnosed long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other student and therefore our attendance ambition for these students is the same as they are for any other student. We are mindful of the barriers that some students can face and we will work with families to put additional support in place and make reasonable adjustments where necessary to help students access their full-time education. We will consider whether additional support from external partners would be appropriate and will liaise or make referrals so that we can work together to provide the best support possible.

Students with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are

responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. Please see further information on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

7.2 Working collaboratively with the local authority and other partners

Erasmus Darwin Academy works with the local communities and local authority (including voluntary and community groups) to improve attendance and to help remove the barriers to attendance that families experience. With GDPR in mind, we work jointly and share relevant data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the student (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms). To facilitate timely collaborative working across partners, all schools are legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- Every time a student's name is to be added to, or deleted from, the school admission register outside of standard transition times (including the statutory reason for deletion).
- The name and address of any student who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for 10 days or more without the absence being recorded as authorised.

8. Attendance Monitoring

We will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify individuals, cohorts or groups that require support with their attendance to deliver intervention in a targeted way. Attendance data will be shared with teachers, tutors and pastoral staff to facilitate discussions with students about their attendance. Data will also be shared with governors and the Local Authority as requested. Analysis of data will also be used to identify patterns and trends and relate this to local, regional and national levels of attendance (where available) to identify areas of focus for improvement.

8.1 Daily

Attendance is monitored on a daily basis by the attendance team, tutors (except for Wednesday) and teachers. Where possible, we adopt an approach of early intervention to avoid issues escalating and attendance and engagement in Academy life declining. Parents are expected to notify the Academy before 8.40am if their child is going to be absent or late. Parents should then call on each day of continued absence unless advised differently by a member of Academy staff. If the Academy is not contacted, the student will be marked with an 'N' on the register. All N codes will be followed up on the same day and no absence will be left without an official code, see Appendix 1. If no reason for absence is received by the end of the day, this may be classified as an unauthorised absence and coded as 'O' (unauthorised absence).

All Persistent Absentees (less than 90%) will be checked, monitored and this may be followed up on the same day as absence with a telephone call or email to parents.

8.2 Weekly

Analysis of all absence takes place weekly, highlighting those within each year that have had an absence during the previous week or those with an attendance rate of less than 90%. Monitoring of groups and vulnerable students will take place weekly to highlight any patterns or cause for concern. Follow up constitutes, ongoing monitoring, parental communication, student mentoring or a meeting with the Attendance and Engagement Manager or an Assistant Headteacher. Information will be shared with Tutors so that motivational and developmental conversations can take place with students and informed discussions can take place with parents.

8.3 Half Termly

Complete analysis of whole school attendance by year groups, student groups and sub-groups. Data to be shared with SLT, other relevant staff groups and Governors.

8.4 Annually

Annual report on attendance for Governors, highlighting trends over the last three years. A review of the Attendance Policy will also take place annually.

8.5 Targeted monitoring

All students are monitored weekly on their level of attendance and the relevant action is taken as explained in appendix 2.

8.6 Rewards

In order to promote the importance of good attendance for our students, we use a range of rewards to acknowledge good and improved attendance including the following:

- Weekly excellence awards for those students who have 100% attendance from the previous week.
- Acknowledging improved attendance.
- Sharing in students' progress success during our termly Celebration of Achievement Assemblies. There is always a strong correlation between good academic progress and good levels of attendance.
- Acknowledging those students with 100% attendance at the end of each academic year, as well as those with 100% over multiple years.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of ALL staff to promote the regular and punctual attendance of all students. For those staff with pastoral responsibilities, they also have an additional responsibility to assist with the implementation of the Academy ethos and attendance policy.

9.1 The Governing Body

The governing body hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy by challenging and ensure the Academy fulfil their statutory duties. Improving attendance requires constant focus, and effective whole school approaches require regular ongoing support, guidance, and challenge. Our governing body recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies. The governing body are ultimately responsible for ensuring due regard to guidance and compliance with the law on school attendance.

9.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is ultimately responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

9.3 Senior Leadership Team/those with responsibility for different groups

Those with responsibility for different groups of students will meet with the Attendance and Engagement Manager to identify and support when Attendance is a barrier to progress and engagement in school life. (e.g. Assistant Headteachers, Heads of House, SENDco, Year 10 & 11 progress leader)

9.4 Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance

The Senior Leader has the responsibility to maintain and improve regular attendance. The Attendance and Engagement Manager meets with the Senior Leader and informs them of which students have low or falling attendance. The Senior Leader may follow up by communicating with parents via email or phone, seeing a student in school, meeting with parents, liaising with/ referring to other professionals or agencies.

9.5 The Attendance and Engagement Manager

The Attendance and Engagement Manager:

- Reports to the Senior Leadership team on a regular basis with regards to whole school attendance
- Provides information for Assistant Headteachers and tutors on a weekly basis regarding student intervention and attendance issues
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Utilises outside agencies and links with other professionals to request additional support for families who may be struggling with attendance issues amongst their children.
- Liaises with the Headteacher in relation to requests for leave during term time and when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Works with individual students, liaising with parents, staff and other partners

9.6 The Attendance Officer (reception staff in the absence of the attendance officer)

- Monitors and records attendance and reasons for absence for every session on a daily basis to ensure the safeguarding of students
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Attendance and Engagement Manager
- Produces a list of first day absence on a daily basis
- Follows up on N Codes and reasons for absence ensuring all students are accounted for
- Processes paperwork for local authority fixed penalty notices (Attendance Officer only).

9.7 Form Tutors

Form Tutors are responsible for recording the first registration mark during Tutor time (except on a Wednesday when students go straight into Period 1 where the am register is taken), using the correct codes, and submitting this information using the SIMS system. Morning registers are taken at 8.40am. Tutors will have discussions with students and their families and will also inform the attendance team of attendance related information received from or about a student in their tutor group.

9.8 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and for completing the registration mark on a Wednesday, using the correct codes, and submitting this information using the SIMS system. Registers will be taken within the first 10 minutes of each session/lesson. Registers must be completed for every lesson throughout the course of the Academy Day. If there are any issues preventing a member of staff taking a register, reception must be notified as soon as possible.

9.9 Staff supporting students during lesson time

Any member of staff who is working with a student at the start of a session which means that the student is not attending their timetabled session, must register the student. Any member of staff with access rights to SIMS attendance can register the student directly using the correct code. Alternatively, staff must inform Reception so that the register can be updated.

9.10 Reception/Office Staff

Reception/Office staff are expected to take messages from students and parents about absence and record it on the school system (SIMS). Reception staff will update the register on SIMS when a student signs in when arriving to school after 8.40am or leaves at any time throughout the school day.

10. Staff training

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard students. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. Training on attendance and working with families is included in the Academy's continued professional development offer for all staff.

11. Motivation and rewards

Students are recognised and praised for good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and termly letters/phone-calls home.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Attendance and Engagement Manager and the Assistant Headteacher i/c of Attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body and wider staff.

13. Links with Other Policies

This policy is linked to the following policies:

- Safeguarding incorporating child protection
- Home visits policy

Appendix 1 Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Present

Code /\: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Students must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a student were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as present for statistical purposes. Students must be in school at the start of Period 4 to receive a present mark for the afternoon session (this register will remain open for 20 minutes).

Code L: Late arrival

We actively punctuality to school and all lessons. All students are expected to be in school by 8.35am for the 8.40am official morning register to be taken. Anyone arriving in to school or registration between 8.40am – 9am will be issued with a late mark and may be issued with a sanction if there is no valid reason for lateness. A student arriving after the register has closed will be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate. If a student arrives to their lesson after the majority of other students, for no valid reason, they will be given a late mark. An accumulation of late marks on the register may incur a sanction.

Absent

Authorised Absence from School - (coding will impact on percentage attendance)

Authorised absence means that one of a specific set of circumstances applies, as set out below:

Code C: Leave of absence granted by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence. We will consider each application of this code individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the absence. Code 'C' is used entirely at the school's discretion.

Specific leaves of absence may also be granted where:

Students' participating in a performance or undertaking employment during school hours

The Academy can grant leave of absence for a student to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance, within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 if the local authority has given the student a licence for that performance. (e.g. Pantomime for a registered theatre company, or a modelling contract). The number of days permitted will be determined by the Academy. Legislation sets out that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. There are some exemptions, including the granting of Body of Persons Approval (BOPA). BOPAs can be issued by the local authority where a performance is to take place, or by the Secretary of State (generally only if there are to be many children involved and a number of different locations, but legislation does not limit this to those situations). We will be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence or a BOPA; as long as this does not have a negative effect on a student's education. Where the licence specifies the dates that a student is to be away from school to perform, we will record the absence for those days as authorised. A leave of absence form must be completed.

A student is subject to a temporary part-time timetable

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, we have agreed to a student being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore will treat absence as authorised.

A student is pregnant

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence. We will act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each case. Ultimately it is at the headteacher's discretion how much leave to grant.

Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school

Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable. Where a leave of absence is granted under exceptional circumstances, we will determine the number of days a student can be absent from school.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

Used when a student is suspended from school or excluded from school. Where alternative provision is made, we will record this using the appropriate code for attending an approved educational activity.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

Parents/carers should notify us on **every day** the child is unable to attend due to illness. This code is used when a student cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). We will not routinely request medical evidence unnecessarily as we understand it places additional pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointments. Only where the school has a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness will medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Code M: Medical or dental appointment

We encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. To use the 'M' code we require evidence prior to the absence for the appointment and students should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. If a student is present for the am or pm registration, the absence will not affect attendance percentage for this session.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents). As a general rule, we would interpret 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' as a day when the student's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and a parent applies for more than one day, we can only record one day as authorised on this basis; the rest of the request would be a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Code S: Study leave

Study leave will be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 students during public examinations. As study leave is unsupervised it is recorded as absence.

Code T: Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller – English and Welsh Roma, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code is used when the student's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. Students from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other students in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a student's absence is not one of the types of absence listed above or where the reason for a student's absence has not been provided and cannot be established.

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school

The school has not granted a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the period of leave granted. We cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If a parent does not apply in advance, leave of absence will not be granted.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

We will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence on the first day of absence. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. If a reason for absence cannot be established by the end of the school day, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised on the student's record as Code O.

Code O: Absent without authorisation

Where no reason for absence is established or the Academy do not agree that the student should not be in school or should be authorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Where a student has arrived late after the am register has closed and the Academy is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.

Attending an approved educational activity

An approved educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded and is where a student is attending another school at which they are registered or taking part in off-site

activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or unregistered alternative provision. Students will only be recorded as attending an off-site activity if it is approved by the Academy, of an educational nature and supervised by someone authorised by us. Ultimately, we are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of students taking part in an off-site educational activity.

Attending another school at which the pupil is registered

Code D: Dual registered at another school

This code is used to indicate that the student was not expected to attend Erasmus Darwin Academy because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

Attending an educational activity that takes place outside the school

Code B: Off-site educational Activity

Used when a student attends an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the Academy and is supervised by someone authorised by us. (e.g. attending taster days at other schools)

This code will not be used when a student is at home doing some schoolwork.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

Attending an interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment where we are satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education, or transfer to another school.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and is supervised by a person authorised by the Academy.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

Attendance at an organised visit or trip, including residential trips organised by the Academy, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by us.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for students in the final 2 years of compulsory school age.

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Where a student is unable to attend school because:

- the Academy site or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause at a time when students are due to attend; or
- the transport provided by the Academy or a local authority is not available and the student's home is not within safe walking distance; or
- a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending school.

Code Y is also used where the student is in custody; detained under a court order for a period of less than 4 months or is returning to the Academy at the end of their custodial period.

Administrative codes

Code X: Non-compulsory school age student not required to be in school

Where a student not of compulsory school age is attending the Academy part-time.

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms;
- half terms;
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays);
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of school as a polling station.

Partial school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- 'staggered starts' or 'induction days' where different term dates have been agreed for different year groups - this code is used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend; and
- Use of part of the school as a polling station.

Appendix 2

STAGES AND ACTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY CONCERNS

The below information is for guidance only and action may vary depending on personal circumstances	
Within half term 1, attendance can be adversely affected by minimal attendance. However a decreasing week by week trend would indicate attendance intervention/support as required.	
Stage	Description
1. Tutor Intervention	Initial concerns – Attendance below 95% and/or Punctuality concerns Impact of absence on learning and engagement should be raised by the Tutor and subject teacher. Tutor should follow up absences and punctuality concerns with the student and identify any patterns, involving the relevant staff. Where appropriate, tutors should record conversation on SIMS where there are signs of developing concerns.
Attendance action	1 st letter to parents highlighting initial attendance concern. 2 nd letter to be sent if attendance does not improve over a period of 2 weeks and student is at risk of falling below 90% attendance and becoming a persistent absentee (PA). Punctuality letter sent to parents highlighting concerns and outlining potential consequences of continuation of this issue.

	Attendance data to be shared weekly with staff who have pastoral responsibilities.
2. Tutor/pastoral Interventions Attendance and Engagement Manager Assistant Headteacher Attendance action	Cause for Concern – Ongoing punctuality concerns and attendance failing to remain above 90% (Student is now PA – less than 90%) Tutor and pastoral conversations to continue as above. Telephone communication where appropriate. Attendance and Engagement Manager to discuss with tutor and Assistant Headteacher concerns and actions taken to date. Referral to internal/external partner support to be made where appropriate. Concerns to be raised with wider senior leadership team. Students with ongoing punctuality concerns will be placed on to report for a period until a constant improvement can be seen. Attendance action plan to be triggered. Assistant Headteacher to discuss concerns with student, addressing barriers and take action where required. Telephone conversation from Attendance and Engagement Manager to address concerns and to include current attendance percentage with a view to making improvements wherever possible. 3 rd Letter for those with less than 90% attendance indicating that student is now classed as a persistent absentee and potential legal consequences should there be little or no improvement. Letter also invites parents in to school for a meeting. Parental meeting to involve student and other relevant staff if applicable where the offer of Early Help will be discussed. Action plan to be decided with timescales agreed. Tutor and Assistant Headteacher to be informed of the outcomes if they are not present in the meeting. Parent informed about the process of statutory action if little or no improvement. Attendance to be closely monitored – daily, with a weekly overview provided to tutor and senior leadership team. Referral to Local Authority where appropriate
3. Tutor/teacher/pastoral Interventions Attendance and Engagement Manager Interventions Assistant Headteacher Intervention Attendance action	Serious cause for concerns – Less than 80% attendance/Persistent lateness to school with no valid reason and no improvement. Discussions between student, tutor, teacher and/or pastoral staff about impact of absence and importance of attendance to continue. Attendance and Engagement Manager to have daily conversations with student and to contact home for those with less than 80% when student is absent. Keep tutor and Assistant Headteacher informed. Work closely with Assistant Headteacher/Senior Leadership team to support with ongoing concerns and seek support from partner agencies where possible. Letter to parents inviting them in for follow-up meeting with Attendance and Engagement Manager and Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance. Referral to Local authority (education welfare services) for legal action where this has not previously been done.

4. Attendance and Engagement Manager	Severe attendance concerns - Less than 50% attendance Attendance and Engagement Manager to refer individual case to Designated Safeguarding Lead/Safeguarding team (Potential neglect).
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Appendix 3

Punctuality - Late to Registration/Lesson.

Late to Registration:

All students are expected to be in school by 8.35am so that they can be on time and in the right place for the morning/am register to be taken at 8.40am. Our school gates will be closed at 8.40am, anyone arriving after 8.35am may not have given themselves enough time to get their present mark (/) at 8.40am.

If a student arrives to Registration late and DOES NOT have a note in their planner, this means they have arrived to school on time before the gate was locked at 8.40am but haven't made it to Registration on time. They will be issued with a late mark (L) if they do not have a valid reason. Anyone arriving to school after the gates have been locked will be spoken to by the attendance team to ascertain the reason for lateness. If there is no valid reason for the lateness, a detention will be issued for the following day after school.

Late to Lessons:

If a student is late arriving to their lesson for no valid reason, they will be issued with a late mark (L). An accumulation of late marks will result in the following sanctions:

1 – 3 Lates in one week

No sanction issued. Warning given and message sent home
Message sent home - Repeat offenders to receive a letter home in addition to this

4 – 6 Lates in one week	30 Minute After School Detention Message sent home - Repeat offenders to receive a letter home in addition to this
7 – 10 Lates in one week	45 Minute After School Detention Message sent home - Repeat offenders to receive a letter home in addition to this
11 + Lates in one week	60 Minute After School Detention Message sent home - Repeat offenders to receive a letter home in addition to this

Persistent lateness can/will result in any of the following - in addition to the structured sanction above: (sanctioned by SLT)

- Communication home/Parental meetings
- Punctuality Report
- Loss of Social Time
- Internal Isolation

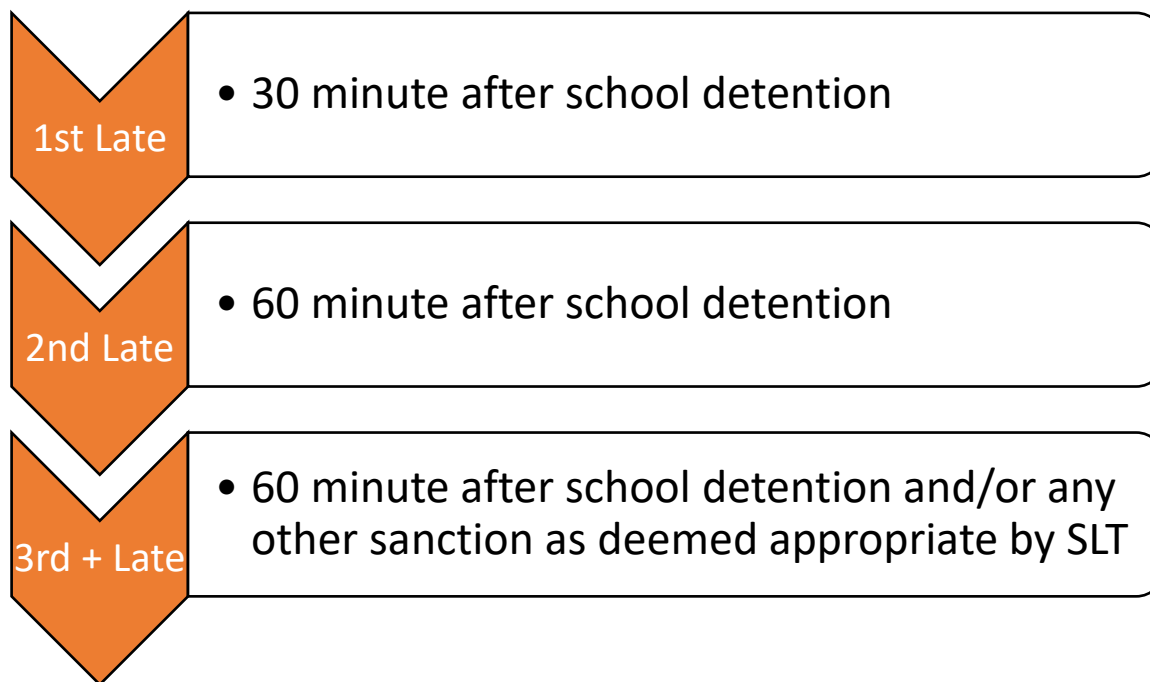
Late to School sanctions.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child arrives at school on time.

The gate will close at 8.40am prompt. Students arriving after this time will enter through Reception and be marked late with sanctions issued accordingly. A note will be made in their planner.

If a student is late to school (through Reception) at any time during the week **for no valid reason**, they will be issued a detention for the next available evening. The detention issued will increase in duration the more times they are late in a week.

Sanctions per week: (Starting a fresh on Monday)



Persistent lateness can/will result in any of the following - in addition to the structured sanction above:

- Communication home/parental meetings
- Punctuality Report
- Loss of Social Time
- Arrival after 9am could result in same day sanction including loss of social time, after school detention or isolation.
- Period of isolation
- Local Authority involvement

Additional documentation to be included:

- Leave of absence form
- Letters to parents
- First day of absence flow chart

Appendix 4: Daily monitoring

