



# Educate U

## Attendance Policy

**Approved by:** Susan Evans, Director of Education

**Date:** 01/04/21

**Review Date:** 04/08/21 (Susan Evans), 24/08/22 (Susan Evans), 01/09/23 (Sarah Paoletti, Headteacher), 13/02/24 (Sarah Paoletti)

**Next review due by:** 12/02/25



## **Attendance Policy**

Prior to being placed with us our children and young people may have experienced difficulties with attending school. Therefore, it will be part of their transition to work with them to improve and maintain a high level of attendance. This policy reflects the vision and aims of Educate U. All staff work collaboratively to encourage every student to strive for excellence. Every child will be supported, challenged and valued. One way in which we strive to do this is by encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their maximum potential. We are determined in encouraging the development of high self-esteem and for our children to take pride and ownership of their learning. In conjunction with this, we will continuously provide a clear framework for parents and staff as well as clear procedures for involving parents and/or external agencies where appropriate.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils that are registered at our school on the school website. Educate U encourages all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality and recognises that

*“parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly” (DfE 1999).*

### **Aims & Objectives**

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and the Central Advisory Team in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve students’ achievement by ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 95% for all students, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and students of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child’s education.

- Ensure that our policy applies to all children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with students, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all students realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in students a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

### **Parents/Carers**

We will work closely with our parents/carers to support the students if their attendance starts to decline. We will monitor attendance and when a difficulty arises, we will work in partnership to support the child back into education. This can be a home visit, change of timetable, change of activities. We need to minimise the impact on the students learning by encouraging and promoting attendance.

### **Punctuality**

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

- To ensure that their children arrive to school on time. Doors open at 9.25 am. This is sufficient time for all pupils to get to their classroom.
- To ensure children who are late after 9.40 am report to the school office to sign in. Records are kept of the pupils that are late with an L code in the register
- To ensure children are collected promptly at the end of the school day and that necessary arrangements are in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child's normal arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this.

### **Absences**

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To notify the school on the first day of absence before 08:45am or as soon as possible. Parents can report an absence by telephoning the school office, or emailing [office@educateu.co.uk](mailto:office@educateu.co.uk)
- To provide medical evidence where possible, on the child's return to school.
- To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.
- To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.

Parents/carers of children for whom we do not know the reason for absence will be contacted after 10:30am.

### **Illness/Medical absences**

In addition to the points above, if a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc.

The school will automatically request medical evidence for any illness absence taken immediately before or after a school holiday.

### **Absence for Holidays**

Parents/carers are expected to take their children on holiday during the school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education. If there are exceptional circumstances, parents/carers must complete an absence request form in advance of the trip (ideally at least 4 weeks prior). These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher or Senior Management Team (SMT), and they will use their discretion whilst applying government recommendations.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To obtain an absence request form from the school office.
- To complete and submit the form in advance of the period of absence (ideally 4 weeks prior).

If parents/carers decide to take a holiday without SMT's authorisation, the child's absence(s) will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Absence for Other Reasons**

Absences for reasons such as religious observance (up to 2 days per year) or close family bereavement *may* be authorised by SMT. These requests must be discussed with the school. Absences for close family members' weddings or funerals will be limited to one day's authorised absence, if granted.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To inform the office, in writing, of the need for leave in circumstances which are known in advance.
- To inform the school as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur which prevent a family bringing a child to school, so that the appropriate code can be recorded in the register.

### **Unexplained Absence**

When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the parent/carers will be investigated and may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local

Authority. The school will work closely with home to find a solution to the situation and return the child to the school. If Safeguarding is identified the appropriate measures will be implemented.

We provide a bespoke timetable for children who are struggling with attendance at school; this will include visits from the school team, phone calls emails and the use of outside providers to re-engage and work with the child's anxieties.

### **Children Missing in Education**

If a child is absent (unexplained) for at least 5 consecutive days. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a total of 10 days, the family will be referred as a CME case for the Local Authority. Link for form below:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education/schools-new/attendance/child-missing-education>

Educate U will try every support measure available to us to help the family help the child to return to school.

## Appendix1: Absence request form

Pupil Information			
Pupil Name:		Class:	
Name of Parent / Carer making the request:		Parent/Carer Contact number:	
Parent/Carer contact email:			
Absence Request Information			
Date(s) of Requested Absence:			
Reason for Absence:	<input type="checkbox"/> Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Illness <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Family Emergency <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Observance <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Reasons (Please Specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify):		
Duration of Absence:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Day <input type="checkbox"/> Partial Day (Please Specify Time):		
Additional/Supporting Comments:			
Parent/Guardian Signature:			
Date of Submission:			

Please submit this form to the school office at least 14 days prior to the planned absence, or as soon as possible in case of unexpected absences. Approval of the absence request is subject to school policies and regulations. For any questions or further assistance, please contact the school office.