



Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Federation Board	Date: September 2025
Last reviewed on:	September 2025	
Next review due by:	September 2026	

This policy supports the rights respecting principles and is particularly applicable to the following articles:

Article 2

The Convention applies to everyone: whatever their race, religion or abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 12

Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 13

Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Article 19

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 24

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 27

Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical, social and mental needs. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

Article 28

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 32

Governments must protect children from work that is dangerous or might harm their health or education.

Article 37

No child shall be tortured or suffer other cruel treatment or punishment. A child should be arrested or put in prison only as a last resort and then for the shortest possible time.

Children must not be in a prison with adults. Children who are locked up must be able to keep in contact with their family.

Article 39

Children neglected, abused, exploited, tortured or who are victims of war must receive special help to help them recover their health, dignity and self-respect.

At **Ealing Bridges Federation**, we expect pupils to attend school daily. Research shows there is a direct correlation between poor attendance and poor outcomes for pupils. Across the federation, we have created a welcoming and supportive environment where pupils feel safe and can flourish. We have a number of staff available who can support parent/carers if they are finding it difficult to get their child/ren into school as well as offering before and after school provision.

Key Lady Margaret Staff who can support parent/carers with attendance.

Liane Simpson	Headteacher and designated senior leader for attendance
Rebecca Kumar	Senior Assistant Headteacher
Claire Desousa	Assistant Headteacher
Umaira Ali	Assistant Headteacher
Alison Towers	Lead Practitioner for SEND
Inderjit Sidhu	Administrator for attendance
Manvinder Mathadu	Parent Ambassador
Nisha Aggarwal	Parent Ambassador
Leonie Thomas	Parent Ambassador with a specific focus on SEND

Email: ladymargaretadmin@ealingbridges.org.uk

Telephone: 020 8566 6486

Key Durdans Park Staff who can support parent/carers with attendance.

Sean Formella	Headteacher and designated senior leader for attendance
Yasodara Selvarajah	Deputy Headteacher
Priya Odedra	Assistant Headteacher
Inderjit Sidhu	Administrator for attendance
Karmjit Mangat	Parent Ambassador

Email: durdansparkadmin@ealingbridges.org.uk

Telephone: 020 8575 1477

Regular attendance is defined to be in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school.

Supreme court Ruling April 2017

Regular attendance is attendance at school on each day the school is open for the pupils unless there is an 'authorisable' reason to be absent; (registration regulations 2006 (amended). Section 444 of the education act 1996). "If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence." A pupil's unauthorised absence is an offence for the parent.

Schools in the federation aim to:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and good time keeping for all children and groups of children
- Maintain a low rate of persistent and severe absenteeism (<90% and <50% attendance)
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of efficient and fulltime attendance.
- Help your child attain their full potential academically and socially

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork, and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attendance encourages responsible learning habits and prepares children for higher education and for their working life.

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ensuring your child attends school on each day the school is open for the pupils unless there is an 'authorisable' reason to be absent. Only the school can authorise an absence
- Phone in to the school on each day of absence, with a reason for an absence
- Provide a timely reason, satisfactory to the school, for an absence; otherwise, the absence will remain unauthorised
- Arranging (where possible) all non-emergency medical and dental appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Do not plan any holidays during term time
- Keeping the school updated by telephone, email, or letter of any changes of circumstances.
- Making sure we always have your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, email addresses and emergency contact details

Absence should only happen when:

- Your child is significantly/symptomatically ill and therefore unfit to attend school.
- There should be an observable symptom/s; 'feeling unwell' is not enough.

- We may ask for medical verification where absence claimed as illness is frequent, prolonged or where there are absences immediately before or after a school holiday.
- b) If there is an unavoidable/unforeseen reason or circumstance which is causing a difficulty, the school will ask for evidence
- c) If your child has a documented medical condition that hinders regular attendance, please let us know; the school will ask for evidence in such cases.

If you are leaving the area or changing schools, please complete a **Leaver's Form** available at the school office. Schools and the local authority are obliged to track pupils from school to school, even if you are leaving to live abroad. Follow-up enquiries on inadequate information can be intrusive. As well as calls, enquiries include unannounced visits to your given address.

What the school will do:

- While we expect a parent to contact us with a reason for each absence, on occasions they might forget, we will endeavour to call, text, or otherwise contact parents. Schools have a safeguarding role so on occasion, home visits may be made by school staff if we have not heard from you for 3 or more days.
- Where a child has a Social Worker, we will inform him/her of absences
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance or punctuality.
- The school will express 'a concern' either verbally or by letter. If attendance does not improve or explanations for absence or lateness are unsatisfactory, you may be invited to a meeting. The school will also outline what the attendance expectations are and what actions will follow

We will seek to support you in various ways including:

- a) We may invite you to participate in an Early Help and Assessment Plan (EHAP)
- b) You may be invited to agree an Attendance Contract.
- c) A referral may also be made to external partners, including the Local Authority School Attendance Service, whose officers visit the school regularly to review and support attendance and punctuality issues.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Regularly inform parents about your child's attendance and absence levels through parent/teacher meetings and termly reports.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the school literature, on our website, at open evenings, in the Home-School Agreement and in pupil's annual reports and during meetings and workshops.
- Publish our attendance data on the school website
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance and punctuality by: recognising classes which meet the attendance target, through postcards and certificates in assemblies.

- If your child has a documented medical condition, we will wish to discuss this with you. We will devise a care plan with you to support your child in school; this might also require us to refer to the school Nursing Team or on occasion contact your GP/health professional. The school will consider whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, and make referrals in a timely manner, working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support. In some cases, this may include a referral for Alternative Provision.
- Share attendance data regularly with the Local Authority Attendance Service
- Where attendance concerns persist, the school will hold more formal conversations with the parent/s (and pupil where they are old enough and able to understand and participate).
- Escalate the matter to the Local Authority Attendance Service (this includes unauthorised absence due to significant lateness) for prosecution, where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate.

Authorised absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as ‘authorised absences.’ That is when the school accept the reason given for absence.

We realise that there are rare and unavoidable occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent, such as sudden bereavement, unexpected parental illness, or a family crisis. If this happens, please let us know and we shall try to deal with the matter sympathetically. However, these absences will not be authorised.

Following such incidents, parents are expected to make any necessary arrangements for their child to return to school as soon as possible (ideally the next day). If the absence is likely to be prolonged, parents must write to the Headteacher outlining the reasons.

Please note that when illness is a frequent reason claimed for absence, the school will ask for evidence other than a parent’s word to allow for further authorisation of absences.

Unauthorised absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are not permitted by law.

These are known as “unauthorised absences”. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery or repair
- Going for a family day out / Going shopping
- Because you have visitors
- Because you did not know school was open
- Interpreting or supporting a parent at a meeting
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Because it is your child’s birthday
- Parent’s illness (other than in an emergency)
- Where there is no explanation for an absence, or the school considers the reason given for the absence as unsatisfactory.
- Absence following or prior to a period of school closure (at the end and beginnings of terms and half terms) or following a period of authorised leave, unless satisfactory

evidence to justify this has been provided

- Term time holiday
- Delayed flights.

Please be aware that unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action. Sanctions for continued, unauthorised absence include warnings, penalty notices (fines) 3*

Persistent absence and severe absence

Once a child's attendance falls to 90% for whatever reason, he/she is automatically defined by the Department for Education (DfE) irrespective of the reason for absence as a **Persistent Absentee**. Once a child's attendance falls below 50%, they are termed **Severely Absent**.

Both scenarios present a severe problem for pupils. Much of the work they miss when they are off school is never made up, these gaps in their learning leave children at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. Statistics show a direct link between poor attendance and under-achievement, particularly at GCSE.

Such low attendance is well below our expectations and as such, the school will work in partnership with the parent, the Local Authority, and other external partners to support parents to improve matters. In such cases, parents will be offered an Early Help Assessment and might be invited to agree a Parenting Attendance Contract with the school or the Local Authority as a way of managing improvement.

Unauthorised absences are reported to the Local Authority (this includes absence due to significant lateness). The School Attendance Service may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. The school will then work in partnership with you until matters improve.

Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action.

Sanctions for continued, unauthorised absence include warnings, penalty notices (fines) 3*¹ prosecution in the magistrate's court or an education supervision order through the family proceedings court

3* Payment of the penalty discharges liability for the offence. It is an alternative to prosecution. There are 2 levels of penalty notice - **£80** (if paid within 21 days of issue), and **£160** (if paid later than 21 days but within 28 days). Failure to pay will result in prosecution in magistrate's court for irregular attendance, where, on conviction a fine of up to **£2,500** may be imposed as well as a record of criminal conviction.

Exceptional Leave - Term Time Leave of Absence

Amendments to the 2006 School Attendance Regulations make it clear that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time for holidays. Leave of absence is only granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g., if there is an emergency) at the

discretion of the Headteacher and in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the federation board. There is no entitlement to time off during term time.

Only in an exceptional circumstance will term time leave be considered. All leave is granted at the Headteacher's decision. Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence need to complete an application form well in advance and before booking tickets or making travel arrangements (forms are available at the school office). Parents sometimes confuse 'telling' the school as being good enough; this is not so.

If a child goes abroad during a school holiday period, the parent must make definite arrangements so that they return in good time for school re-opening [Term Dates | Lady Margaret Primary School](#). Absence claimed as illness before or after a school holiday must be reported during the period of absence and medical evidence produced on return to school. Otherwise, the absence will be regarded as unauthorised leave.

If you experience unexpected delays in returning from a trip abroad or within the UK, for whatever reason, the school will require documentary evidence accompanied with proof of original return dates i.e., tickets or an official travel plan showing intent to return on time. Medical Documentation should be in English. In certain circumstances, if a child remains abroad at the beginning of a school term and absence is extended, their school place may be at risk.

- If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised, and you will be liable for a Fixed-Penalty Notice. Where a child's whereabouts cannot be established, he/she may be regarded as a 'Child Missing Education' and their place cannot be guaranteed.
- Except for leave taken in an emergency, retrospective approval cannot be given without an application having been made. Satisfactory evidence of an emergency will need to be provided
- A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent in respect to each of their children in line with the local authority Fines protocol.

Punctuality - Parents remain responsible for their child's punctuality

Good punctuality is a prerequisite to good learning and shows a respect between pupil, family, and school.

Parents remain responsible for their child's punctuality at the start of the school day.

Arriving late to school on a consistent basis can have longer-term academic effects. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for the child. If showing up late to school becomes a habit, children may develop the notion that lateness is acceptable behavior. This belief can negatively impact their future work ethic and employment opportunities.

- At **Lady Margaret**, morning registration is at **8:45am**. You need to aim for your child to come through the school gate at **8:40am**, at the latest.
- At **Durdans Park**, morning registration is at **9:00am**. You need to aim for your child to come through the school gate at **8:55am**, at the latest.

- Registers at both schools close at **9:30am**.
- All lateness is recorded daily. The number of minutes late and the reason for lateness, if known, will also be recorded. This information is discussed at regular meetings with the local authority Attendance Officer and can be made available to the courts in the form of a report should a prosecution be the outcome of repeated lateness.
- Arrival after the close of registration, where there is not an acceptable reason, such as a medical appointment, will be marked as a missed session; unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with the DfE guidance. The U code has the value of an unauthorised absence. When late arrivals are frequent or persistent, we will want to discuss this with you to assess what support or guidance you or your child may need. A referral may also be made to the Local Authority Attendance Service and or other external partners for additional support and monitoring.
- Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in learning. A good understanding of the work and good progress can only take place when the child is in the classroom regularly and on time and ready to learn.

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than at the end of Year 6) parents are asked to:

- Give the school comprehensive information about your plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, who your child will be living with and your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. A Leaver's Form is available from the school office, which you should complete. (A destination country or another named Local Authority without other details is not sufficient).
- When a child leaves and we do not have information about where they have gone/will be educated, then he/she is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (formerly Social Services), the Police, benefits/council tax records and other agencies, to try to locate your child. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Withdrawals

- Parents who remain a resident locally can only withdraw their children from school if they have a confirmed start date at another school or are undertaking to educate the child at home (Elective Home Education). If the latter, this must be confirmed in writing to the school by the parent. Pupils remain registered at school until such conditions are satisfied.

Legal note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure efficient and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils of statutory school age (Education Act 1996). This is the legal requirement. The Local

Authority School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families and other partnership agencies to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or are given a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine).

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Present codes

/ \ present during registration

B educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes

K attending provision arranged by the local authority

L arrived after the register has started but before it has closed

P Sporting activity with prior agreement from school

V educational visit or trip

W work experience

Authorised absences

C exceptional circumstances

C1 in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad

C2 absent due to part-time timetable

D dual registered

E suspended or permanently excluded

I illness (not medical or dental appointments)

J1 job/school/college interview

M medical or dental appointment

Q unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements

R religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)

S study leave

T parent travelling for occupational purposes

X non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

Y1 unable to attend due to transport provided not being available

Y2 unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption

Y3 unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Y4 unable to attend due to whole school closure

Y5 unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention

Y6 unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

Y7 unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)

Unauthorised absence

G holiday (not agreed)

N reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)

O absent in other or unknown circumstances

U late after register has closed

Z pupil not yet on register

Appendix 2: Persistent Absence

