

Attendance Policy

Sept 2021

Version 4

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff at Expanse Learning Wigan School (Hereafter referred to as the School).

2. Attendance at school is a legal requirement between the ages of 5 – 18 years.

Young people are entitled to formal education during this phase of their lives. It is important that they receive their entitlement for their present and future lives and for the economic and well-being of society. Expanse Learning is responsible by law for making sure that registered students of compulsory school age regularly attend our school. The Government also has a priority in reducing unnecessary absence from school. Many students attending Expanse Learning School are more vulnerable and have greater needs than the majority of their mainstream counterparts. This means that they may have more genuine absences from school for medical reasons or experience greater social need than others. It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance.

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school. We at Expanse Learning School are committed to ensuring that the families, parents and carers of our students understand how important this is.

We give high priority to conveying to parents and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance. If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

3. Policy Procedures

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording student's attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order.

Registration closes at 9.30. All student arrivals after this point are treated as absent from that session, unless they arrive on school transport.

4. Procedures for following up absence or lateness

Students who arrive late (i.e. after 9.30) should be registered as Late.

Parents or carers dropping students off late must report to Reception and explain the reasons for lateness. This will be recorded in the register along with the time of arrival. It is the responsibility of the parent / carer to contact the school on the first morning of the child's absence. This can be done by leaving a message on the answer phone or phoning when the school office opens at 8.30am. In any case a parent/ carer should contact prior to 9.30am. If this contact is not made Expanse Learning will contact the parent/carers by text message/ telephone or, if the parent is unobtainable, we will email and/or write a letter/conduct a home visit requesting information. If this fails to provide an explanation for the absence a Senior Leader will attempt to get in touch and a (second) letter may be sent to the parents / carers.

In the event of persistent non-attendance and non-response, the school will organise a meeting with regard to that student's attendance inviting parents and relevant professionals. The meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the student from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance Authorised and unauthorised Absence "Leave" in relation to a school means leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school.

The Head Teacher will only consider authorising an absence during term time where an application has been made in advance and where they are satisfied that there are exceptional or special circumstances to justify the request. The DfE now state that leave of absence requests for holidays should not be granted. It is acknowledged that due to individual needs of students at Expanse Learning School, the Head Teacher may apply special consideration to requests for compassionate leave. It may be necessary for the school to ask the parent/ carer to provide the school with written evidence of the reason for absence e.g. appointment cards, medical certificate or a letter from the GP. If there is an extended period of absence due to medical reasons the school may ask for permission of the parent/ carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

5. Expanse Learning Strategies for promoting attendance / punctuality

Attendance statistics are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, Pastoral Team and the Governing Body and reported to the local authority. Targets are set annually for attendance figures. The current target is 93.7%. Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters and school website, Parent/ Carer progress meetings and student reports will be used.

Students with a known attendance problem admitted to school will be interviewed with parents and will be set targets for improvement. Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding punctuality and attendance. Appropriate school staff with lead responsibilities for pastoral support and attendance monitoring will contact parents and carers to discuss any issues, which may cause a student to experience attendance difficulties. These will be promptly investigated by the school.

The Head Teacher will monitor the completion of the registers and absence rates and will ensure attendance concern events are created to manage/monitor all actions implemented to improve a child's attendance and arrange for the appropriate letter to be sent out to parents if a child is persistently absent from school.

6. Sanctions for persistent lateness and Non – Attendance

A Penalty Notice can be considered for unauthorised leave of absence taken without permission after the third day of absence. It will be issued by the Head Teacher after consultation with the Chair of governors. A penalty Notice can also be considered for any unauthorised absence where there is no justifiable cause. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice. The Local Authority may impose an Education Supervision Order, Parenting Contract or Parenting Order in certain circumstances.

7. Student absence monitoring procedure

- ALL registers must be completed to the office by 9.30am
- All absent students will be contacted on their first day of absence by a designated member of the pastoral team. All telephone calls /texts home will be by 9.30am.
- Records of late arrivals will be recorded on Databridge.
- If on the first call to a student's home no one answers, then a message will be left for the family to contact the school as soon as possible to explain why the student is not at school.
- On making contact with the student's family, they will be informed that for every day the student is absent without explanation the family must contact the school to inform them of the student's progress. If they do not, then the school will contact them each and every day of absence.
- If a student is absent for more than two days without contact by the family the Class Teacher, Assistant Principal or Vice Principal will be informed to follow up the absence.
- If the Expanse Learning staff are unhappy with the reasons given for a student's absence, then the Teacher or Head Teacher will be informed of any concerns and will follow up with the student's family.
- At the end of each term, the Head Teacher will review attendance using reports from Databridge. It will be used to inform individual student's families of any patterns forming. The information will also be used to inform the Senior Leadership Team and School Governors.

8. Expanse Learning Punctuality

If your child arrives after 9.30 but before 10am, they will receive a late mark in the register. At 10.00am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised morning mark. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher to resolve the problem. Persistent lateness should be discussed with the relevant Pastoral staff

9. Non-Attendance

In addition to the procedures set out above, the school will report students' attendance and unauthorised absences to homes in accordance with the legal requirements outlined by the Government.

10. Roles

Families will:

- Notify the school of any absences on the day of that absence
- Keep close contact with the school if a student is on extended leave due to ill health

Teachers will:

- Keep an accurate and up-to-date attendance register of their Group (see details on marking the register above)
- Correct any inaccuracies which may occur in the attendance register
- Follow up absences as outlined above (see "Following up absences")
- Liaise with SLT and the Pastoral team about attendance
- Inform appropriate staff if they receive any communication that a student will need to leave the school premises part way through the day by prior arrangement e.g. for a medical appointment
- Monitor students' attendance and punctuality to lessons

- Inform senior members of staff if a student leaves a lesson without permission and does not return within a short time
- Mark registers at the start and end of the day in a timely fashion
- To discuss the impact of low attendance on learning with families at progress and review meetings where appropriate
- Liaise with Admin staff over any queries
- Keep records of students who arrive late and note down reason in Databridge

Administrative staff will:

- Maintain a record of student attendance on the school’s computer system Databridge
- Telephone /Text students’ homes as necessary re attendance
- Pass on information re attendance to the relevant staff
- Keep records and inform outside agencies as necessary to comply with local and national policy and procedures
- Store notes from home in the student file
- To notify the safeguarding team of absences of vulnerable students
- To send out letters each term whose families attendance falls below 90% when instructed

All relevant staff should refer to absence flowchart for a summary of the school absence process, detailing each step to take, as and when necessary (Appendices)

11. Monitoring arrangements

- The Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- The Board of Directors will check that the school complies with this policy.
- This document will be reviewed **every 12 months thereafter**.
- At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board for review and challenge purposes.

Impact of non-compliance:

Staff:	Disciplinary action
Student:	Suspension, Temporary Exclusion, Permanent Exclusion, Attendance Plan
Legislation/organisational:	Reputational damage, statutory and non-regulated compliance.
Compliance lead:	Headteacher/Director of Schools
Policy Reference:	ELWS-OPR-004
Version:	4
Agreed policy location:	DatabridgeMIS and Company Webpage
Does the policy require Governor approval?	No

Approval

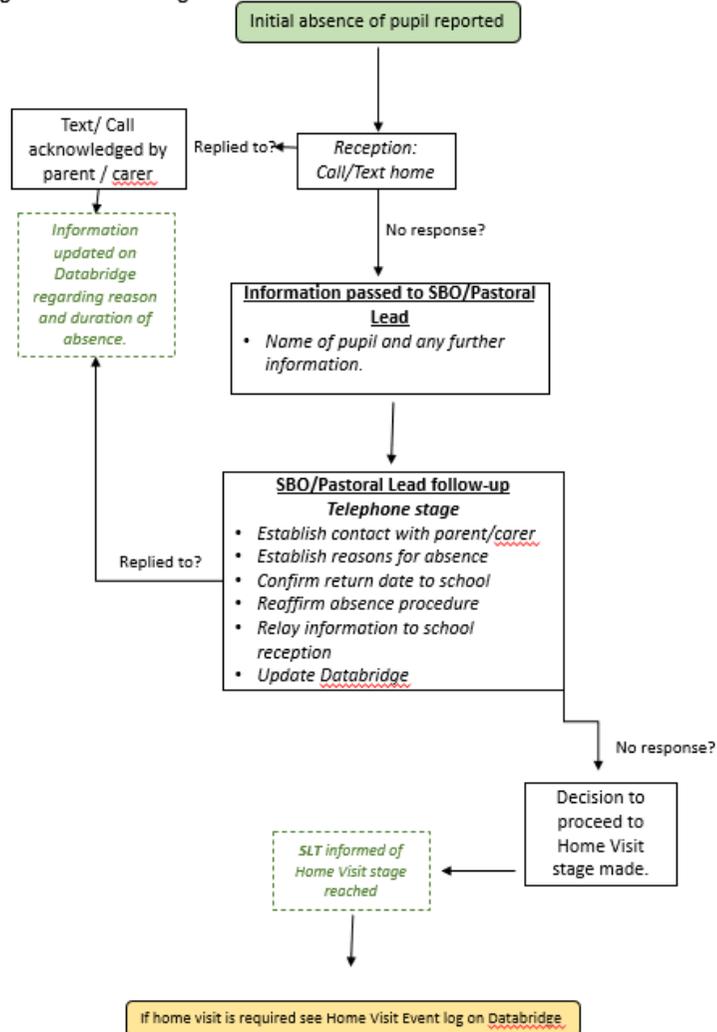
Prepared by Richard King 01/09/2021  Director of Schools, Pre 16 Education	Approved by Tony Brown 01/09/2021  CEO	Counter Signatory Scott Roberts (Assoc. CIPD) 01/09/2021  Head of corporate Services
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Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	21/06/2018	First Issue	20/06/2018
2	01/09/2019	Policy review and transferred to new template	31/08/2020
3	01/09/2020	Policy Review	31/08/2021
4	01/09/2021	Policy reviewed, Flow charts added as appendices and changes made to late recording	31/08/2022
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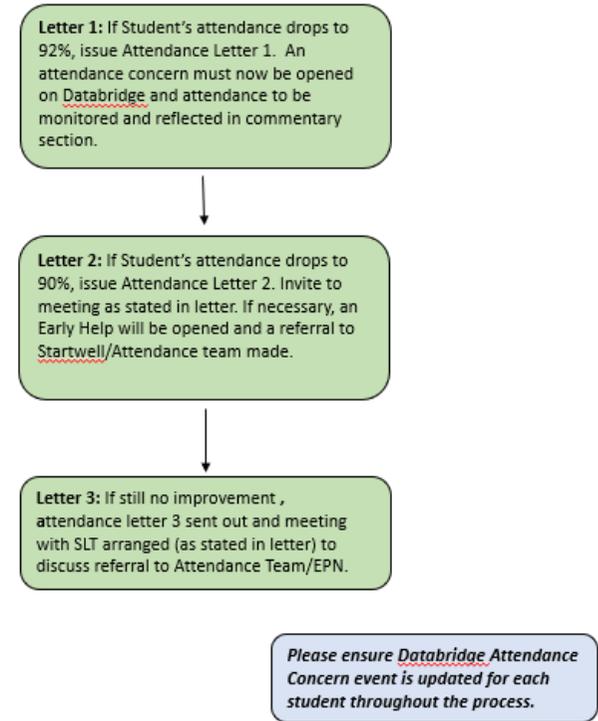
Appendix 1 – Stage 1 initial stage flow chart

Stage One – Initial Stage



Appendix 2 – Stage 2 – Attendance Letters flow chart

Stage Two: Attendance Letters



Other information:

Other Letters Available:

- *Holiday Letter (Declined)*
- *Holiday Letter (Accepted)*
- *Religious Observance*
- *Persistent Lateness*

Time Limited Contract Option: TLC'S can be found on attendance concern events on Databridge. The LA must be informed when a TLC is put in place and must be reviewed regularly with a view to move to a full-time timetable after 6 weeks (max).