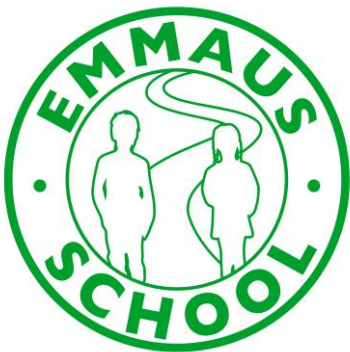


Attendance Policy



EMMAUS SCHOOL

School Lane, Staverton, Trowbridge,

Wiltshire, BA14 6NZ

Tel: 01225 782684

Email: info@emmaus-school.org.uk

www.emmaus-school.org.uk

Introduction

At Emmaus School, we want pupils to thrive educationally, personally, socially and spiritually. A high level of school attendance is an essential part of this process. The Department for Education has published statutory guidance for all schools called 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (August 2024). [Working together to improve school attendance - August 2024.pdf](#) This Government guidance has informed our attendance policy.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that pupils of statutory school age (from the school term after they turn five years old until after until the last Friday in June when the pupil is in Year 11) are in receipt of a full-time education.

We aim to work with parents/carers to ensure that all pupils attend every day and on time, unless the absence is unavoidable. We expect high levels of attendance, but we recognise that there may be exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, or absences relating to persistent health issues. In these situations, we want to partner with parents/carers to support children to attend. Our policy applies to all pupils of statutory school age, across the Key Stages, including EYFS, to promote good attendance and punctuality school-wide.

This attendance policy aims to:

- Support pupils and their parents/carers to maximise attendance and punctuality
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer
- Help parents/carers to be more aware of their legal responsibilities regarding attendance
- Help the school identify where there are problems in attendance and inform decisions on how to remedy those problems.

The school has a safeguarding duty of care to all its pupils. Helping to ensure good attendance is part of this safeguarding duty.

Managing Attendance

School attendance is an important factor in a pupil's academic progress, development and wellbeing. Even an attendance of 90% is the equivalent of missing a half day each week, and over five years, this equates to missing half a year of schooling. Therefore, we actively promote 100% attendance, using a variety of awards to promote attendance and punctuality as we celebrate this achievement.

The role of parents and carers

As a school, we expect parents/carers to:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their children arrive at school punctually
- Contact the school before 9am if their child is unable to attend school, giving the reason
- Inform the school in advance of any medical appointments during school hours; where possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours
- Follow school procedures regarding a request for leave of absence during term time; requests should only be made if absolutely necessary unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests can only be authorised by the Headteacher
- Notify the school immediately of changes to contact details, and ensure that the school has more than one name, address and telephone number as an emergency contact
- Engage with any school strategies designed to improve their child's attendance.

The role of the school staff

At Emmaus School there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues.

Class teachers or form tutors complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement as documented in The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The class teacher or form tutor notifies the Headteacher of children whose attendance is causing concern.

It is the overall responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure:

- The register is recorded electronically each day.
- Attendance and lateness records are up to date.
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call, usually by 9.30am.
- Where there has been no communication, queries are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see Appendix 2)
- Parents are informed annually of the child's attendance figure.

The school has a legal duty to report any suspicious or prolonged absences and any unauthorised absences to the Local Authority.

Expectations of pupils

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- Attend in the correct uniform
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher any problems that may affect their school attendance.

The Role of Governors

We expect that the Governors will:

- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

- 95 - 100% attendance – the class teacher or form tutor to investigate and notify the Headteacher if there are any concerns. The Headteacher to contact parents, if appropriate.
- 90 - 95% attendance - school intervention letters/meeting with parents.
- Where there are concerns that a child's attendance is below 90%, a meeting will be instigated with the Headteacher and SENCO.

Registration procedures

- The school day starts at 8.35 am
- After 8.35am, pupils must report to the school office; the school office administrator will provide access to the school and relevant classroom
- Pupils who arrive at school after the register has been taken but before the register closes will be recorded as 'L' (late) on the register
- Pupils who arrive at school after registers close at 9am, without an unavoidable reason, will have their lateness recorded as 'U' (unauthorised late) which will impact their overall attendance figure.

Schools are legally required to take a register of attendance during the morning and afternoon. Any unexplained absence will be coded as 'unauthorised' until parents/carers provide a reason. This must be no later than 5 days after the session. Staff may only make amendments to the register when there is no known reason for the absence at the time of taking the register and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, the register will show the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment. Registers will be kept for six years as a record.

See Appendices 1 and 2 for admission and attendance register procedures and reporting codes, as of August 2024.

Lateness

Poor punctuality also affects a child's learning. If your child misses the start of the school day they can miss work, and do not spend time with their teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils may also disrupt lessons. Being five minutes late every day is the equivalent of missing 3.4 school days a year.

Where pupils show a persistent pattern of lateness, the school may contact parents/carers advising them of the concern and offering support to resolve the issue. Should the lateness continue, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss their child's lateness.

Reporting a Pupil Absence

Parents/carers must contact school on the first and every subsequent day of absence by 9am.

For any pupil absent at the close of registration, and the reason is unknown, a member of staff will attempt to contact the parent/carers.

The member of staff will ring every contact, starting with the priority contact, until a reason for absence is known. Messages will be left on voicemail requesting parents to contact school regarding their pupil's absence. Outcomes of any phone conversations will be logged on the pupil's electronic school record. Staff will complete the registers in accordance with the correct use of registration codes. See Appendix 1.

Any unexplained absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence if there is no response from a parent/carer to an enquiry regarding their pupil's absence from school.

For absences relating to a medical appointment, the school may request supporting information to authorise this absence. This may be a copy of a text message that clearly identifies who the appointment is for and the time of the appointment, or an appointment card.

Illness

Pupils who are unable to attend school due to diarrhoea or sickness can return 48 hours after the last episode. Pupils with mild coughs, colds, sore throats, sneezes and runny noses who are otherwise well can continue to attend school. However, if they develop a high temperature they should stay at home until their temperature has reduced and they are well enough to return to school. A guide to whether a child should attend school with minor illnesses is here: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk). The school will contact parents/carers if a pupil needs to return home.

Medical Needs and SEN

When long-term physical or mental ill health impacts a pupil's attendance, the school will aim to be sensitive to the needs of the child. The school will work with parents/carers to try to identify the barriers to attendance and identify strategies to support the child's health needs. In situations where a pupil's health needs mean they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, we may seek medical information to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision. This may take a variety of forms, which we will discuss with parents/carers on an individual basis.

Where pupils have an EHCP, we will liaise closely with the pupil's SEN Caseworker to work towards the best attendance outcomes for the pupil.

Leave of Absence

Any requests for leave of absence during term-time should follow school procedures, which can be found in the Parents' Handbook, and be submitted for authorisation (or non-authorisation) before the leave is taken. [Request for permission to take children out of school.docx](#)

Headteachers of independent schools are expected to restrict permitted leave of absence to the following:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA)
- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment when requested in advance by a parent/carer the pupil normally lives with
- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases
- Exceptional circumstances (see below).

Exceptional circumstances

Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances (rare, unavoidable and short) will be considered on an individual basis. Generally, the Department for Education does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

Where a pupil has commenced GCSE studies, it is detrimental to their education to be taken out during term time.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport.

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in “exceptional circumstances”, but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher’s decision is final.

Children Missing in Education

If a pupil fails to attend school for ten consecutive days without explanation, and the school does not know where the pupil is, the school will refer the pupil to the Local Authority as a Child Missing in Education.

The Local Authority ‘Child Missing Education’ policy and procedures can be found on the Wiltshire.gov.uk website as below:

[Appendix2-CMEpolicy.pdf \(wiltshire.gov.uk\)](#)

[Annex 1 - Flowchart - CMOE-CME Agreed SMT Policy 090718.pdf](#)

After a further 10 days of absence with no explanation, the pupil may be at risk of losing their school place. During this 20-day period, school will continue to try to contact parents/carers and will liaise with any other relevant services.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Admission & Attendance Registers

Admission register

The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the school, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the school will:

- maintain an admission register of pupils admitted to the school (also known as the school roll); and
- inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the school's admission register at non-standard transition points.

Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide it with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
- the ground (prescribed in regulation 8) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Attendance register

Attendance of compulsory school-aged pupils is recorded and monitored in accordance with the statutory requirements and the school has adopted the national codes system to enable it to monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations.

The attendance of non-compulsory school age will be recorded in the same way so attendance can be monitored, unexplained absences are investigated, and the school can ensure their safety and welfare.

The school will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

The school is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is

- present;
- absent;
- present but arrived late.

Recording absence

Absence will be recorded as set out as below in Appendix 3 using the national absence codes relating to:

- authorised absence
- excluded (while still on the admission register)
- holiday authorised by the school
- illness
- medical or dental appointments
- religious observance
- study leave
- other.

Appendix 2: Attendance Registers Codes from August 2024

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Hospital education - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code:		
Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. Contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code:		
Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence