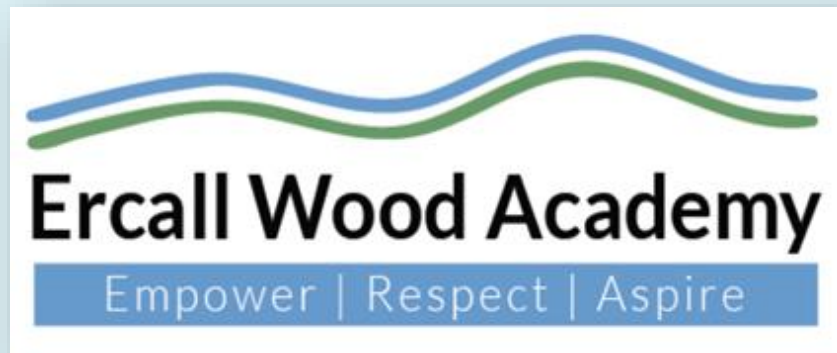


[www.ercallwood.co.uk](http://www.ercallwood.co.uk)



01952 387300



# ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

A Guide for Parents & Carers  
September 2024 – July 2025

## WHAT CAN I DO TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE?

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Here are some of the things that your child can do to ensure that they achieve and maintain good attendance and punctuality:

- Have an evening and morning routine that allows a minimum of 8 hours sleep.
- Limit digital technology use - e.g. gaming, social media, apps etc. and finish at least one hour before bed.
- Allow enough time in the morning for your child to get ready, have breakfast and travel to school and arrive on time.
- Have their own alarm clock.
- Get a reliable friend to call for them in the morning.
- Get their equipment and bag ready the night before.
- Have a regular study time each evening.
- Not waiting for friends in the morning before school so they arrive at school on time (before 8.50)
- Learn bus timetables in advance.

It will also help if parents/carer:

- Take an interest in schoolwork.
- Work with, communicate and support the school.
- Praise their child's efforts when attendance is good.

## WHY IS GOOD ATTENDANCE IMPORTANT?

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- To avoid gaps in learning.
- To help achieve good exam results.
- To help with getting to sixth form, college, an apprenticeship or university.
- To help get a good job.
- To develop a good routine
- To prevent court action.
- To build resilience
- To develop a good immunity
- To build a good character profile

## WHAT IS A 'PERSISTENTLY ABSENT (PA) PUPIL'?

You should not keep your child from school or allow them to be absent for prolonged periods of time:

Your child becomes a 'persistently absent' pupil when attendance falls below 90%.

A PA pupil will be monitored the Attendance Officer and Education welfare Officer (EWO). If your child's attendance is under 90%, we will not be able to authorise any absence without medical evidence (e.g. prescriptions, stamped appointment cards).

As a school we monitor attendance very closely as we recognise the connection between good attendance and positive outcomes. If your child's attendance drops below 95% they will be monitored and you may receive attendance letters informing you of your child's current attendance percentage.

If their attendance drops below 50% this is classed as severely absent and the local authority will be involved to offer additional support to raise your child's attendance.

## WHAT ABSENCES ARE NOT APPROPRIATE?

- *To look after the house or other members of the family.*
- *To go shopping or to visit relatives.*
- *Because they are menstruating.*
- *Because they got up late.*
- *Because they don't want to come to school.*
- *For family birthdays or to go on family outings.*

## WHAT ABOUT HOLIDAYS?

The Department of Education has introduced amendments to holidays taken in term time as of **August 2024**. The Principal will not be able to grant any leave of absence during term time, for any purpose unless they are exceptional circumstances.

If you decide to take a holiday in term time and it has not been authorised you will receive a fixed penalty, where the parent/carer will have to pay £80 for each child removed from school. This will need to be paid within 21 days and, if not paid within this time, the charge will rise to £160 per child and must be paid within 28 days to avoid potential prosecution.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent/carer receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent/carer will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

*Please see the link below for further information from the DfE:*

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/19/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/>

## WHAT IF ABSENCE IS ESSENTIAL?

It is important to get a message to school - it is the responsibility of parents/carers to let the school know the reason for their child's absence as soon as possible, before 9am on **every** day of absence.

Your child deserves a rigorous education and all the opportunities that Ercall Wood Academy has to offer. Coming to school every day is essential for your child's academic, personal and social development.

## WHAT IS OUR PARENT/CARER RESPONSIBILITIES?

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If your child is aged between 5-16, you must make sure he/she attends school and stays in school. This is law. You can be taken to court for breaking this law (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Parents/carers should ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and in a condition to learn. On each day of absence parents/carers must contact the school before 9.00 if possible to inform us of the reason and your child's expected return. We may ask for medical evidence or proof of absence, this can be handed in person or emailed across (see contact details at the back of this booklet).

If you feel there is an ongoing issue (medical, personal or social) affecting your child's attendance please contact our family liaison officer who can support and put you in contact with the relevant member of staff.

## WHAT ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

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As an academy we aim to offer a 'TLC' approach to our attendance strategy. We of course want as many students in the building each and every single day as we are strong advocates for good attendance and its importance. However, we also recognise that not everyone's journey is the same and sometimes we are thrown off track by certain things that may be out of our control which unfortunately negatively affect students' attendance.

All our staff receive regular CPD on supporting students maintain good attendance but also to help remove any barriers to their attendance. We do this by:

- Communicating with home on the day's students are absent.
- Spot patterns in absences or changes in behaviour that may contribute to poor attendance.
- Ask questions regarding absences so any barriers can be removed or addressed.
- Send letter home to make parents/carers aware when a student's attendance declines.
- Use 'keep in touch' home visits to support those students who have been absent.
- Sign post students/families to a range of support
- Give students access to our school counsellor, trust counsellor and support with referrals to external agencies if needed.
- Use the role of our family liaison officer (FLO) to create strong links between home and school
- Arrange meetings to discuss any concerns affecting a student's attendance.
- Involve the Education welfare Officers (EWO) to monitor the improvement of attendance
- Reward and praise all students for maintaining good attendance and seeing a positive change in those who have had poor attendance.
- Encourage students to take responsibility in having a good attendance record and build resilience when facing a challenge that may affect their attendance.
- Recognise that every student is unique and not one strategy fits all with regards to holding a good attendance record during their 5 years with us
- Challenge bad habits that could negatively impact the student's future.

## WHAT IS AN AUTHORISED ABSENCE?

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Parents and carers can explain absences, but they cannot authorise them. Only the school can decide whether explanations about absences are acceptable and can be authorised. For ongoing persistent absence, the school will find medical evidence or proof of absence helpful for our records. All other absences will be coded as 'O' and will not be authorised.

A list of the required DfE attendance and absence codes are available in Chapter 8 of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) guidance.

Any discrepancies will be shared with the trust for a neutral opinion/decision.

## WHAT ABOUT ABSENCE FOR DENTAL/MEDICAL TREATMENT?

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Your child may have to be absent from school for medical or dental treatment. The school must be informed if during school time and a copy of the appointment letter/card shared, but where possible appointments should be arranged before/after school. If there is no alternative and your child must attend during the school day, then in order to minimise the decline in their attendance percentage we would need to register them before 9.30 to receive their morning mark or after 12.30 to receive their afternoon mark. If they left school after these times am or pm mark would be given.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT MISSES TOO MUCH SCHOOL?

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If a student does not attend every day, this is what happens:



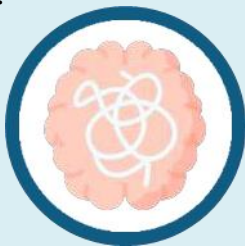
They will not know how to complete the work set.



They may feel left out and get left behind.



Friendship groups may change.



Creates anxiety for your child.



They lose touch.



They will underachieve.

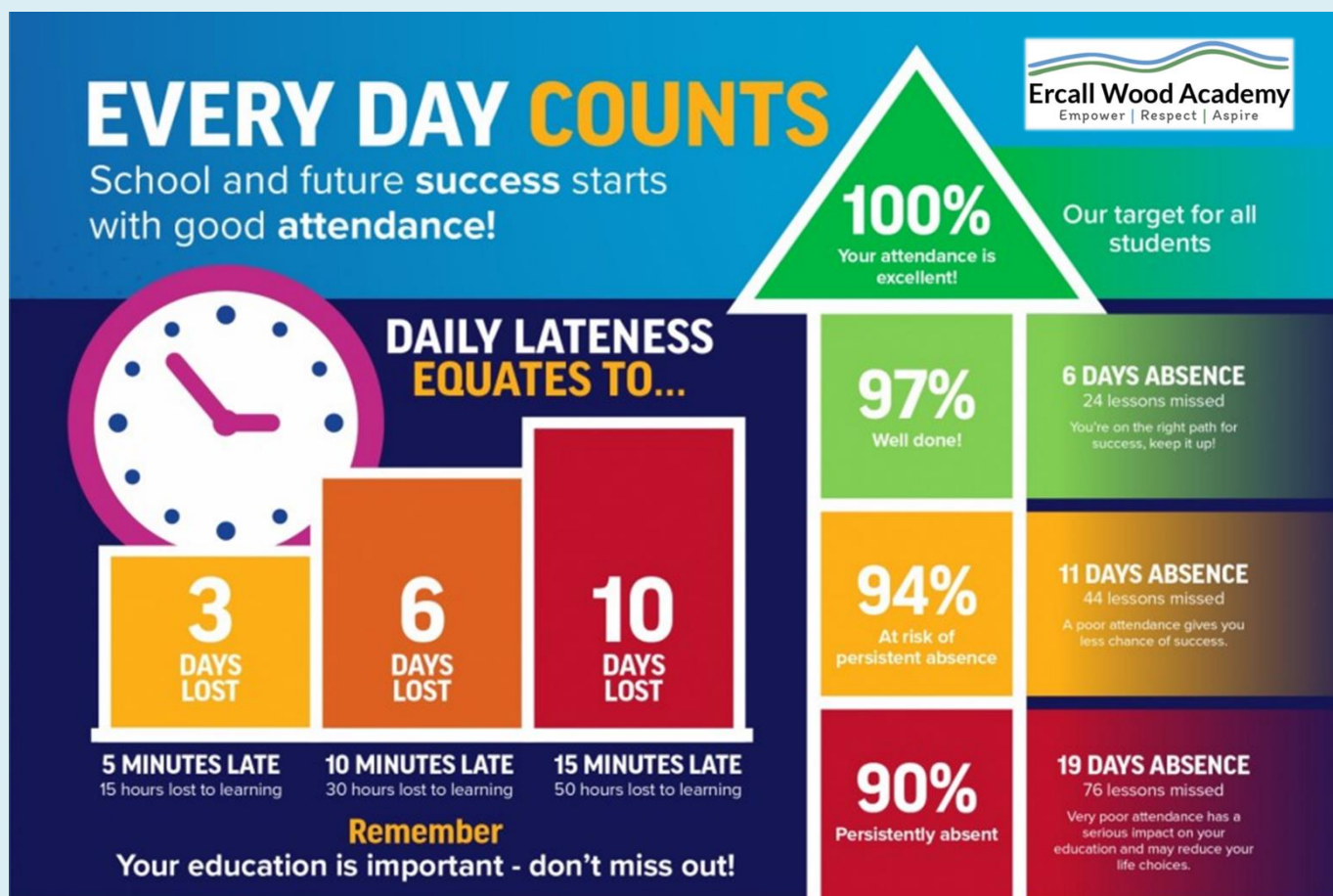
## WHAT REWARDS ARE THERE FOR EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE AND EXEMPLARY PUNCTUALITY?

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All students in school with 100% attendance (for the academic year) are placed in a raffle to have the chance of winning a significant reward. Regular attendance & punctuality focus weeks take place throughout the year with additional opportunities to be rewarded for good attendance and punctuality.

# PLEASE CONSIDER

- 7 sessions (3 and a half days) missed in each half term = a persistently absent (PA) student.
- Missed lessons = Missed opportunities.
- Being on time shows that students are reliable and organised and know that school/education matters.
- Employers want good timekeepers.



## WHAT HAPPENS IF PUPILS ARE LATE?

- Your child will be at a disadvantage by missing parts of their school day.
- They may miss important notices in Form and interrupt the start of their lessons which impacts on theirs and others learning.
- Any students arriving onto school site after 8.50am will enter via the 'Late Gate' and receive an R1.
- If your child arrives after 9:00am, they must sign in via main reception and will receive an R2.
- Anyone who arrives after 9.30 will receive a U code for their morning mark as registers close at 9.30am (this is a direction from the DFE, not a school-based initiative) and will receive an R3.
- If your child's punctuality does not improve, further sanctions will be put in place to monitor the improvement of their punctuality and establish good routines.
- Please can parents/carers contact the academy to inform us of your child's expected late arrival e.g. roadworks, train cancelled or car not starting.

## OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR PUNCTUALITY

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1. Students should arrive for morning line up by 8:45am every morning.
2. Please communicate any expected late arrivals to the academy via reception.
3. We expect all students to arrive on time for ALL lessons.

## ATTENDANCE AT EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

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All students must attend external exams on time as these dates are set by the examinations boards and cannot be changed. If your child fails to attend an external exam parents/carers will be charged the cost of the examination.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH VISITS

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Ercall Wood Academy's Family Liaison Officer (FLO) or Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may complete 'Keeping in Touch' visits for students where they attend the family home. These visits can take place for a range of reasons e.g. the student is not in school, and the parents/carers have not contacted the school to inform them of the reason. This is a procedure that the school must follow by law to ensure that all its students are safe. These visits will take place on either day 1, 3 or 5 of absence depending upon a student's vulnerabilities.

## PD DAYS 2024-2025

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### Autumn Term 2024

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024

### Spring Term 2025

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### Summer Term 2025

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025

*TERM DATES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR ACADEMY WEBSITE*

## CONTACT DETAILS

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Mrs Shelley Williscroft (Attendance Officer) 01952 387300 (option 2)

[taw805attendance@lct.education](mailto:taw805attendance@lct.education)

Mrs Kit Pool (Family Liaison Officer) 01952 387342

[taw805attendance@lct.education](mailto:taw805attendance@lct.education)

Mr Daniel Santopietro (Education Welfare Office) 07458 304032

[dan.Santopietro@lct.education](mailto:dan.Santopietro@lct.education)

Mrs Kiran Kang (Education Welfare Officer) 07962 634398

[kiran.kang2@lct.education](mailto:kiran.kang2@lct.education)

Mrs Emma Little (Assistant Principal Attendance & Safeguarding) 01952 387390

[emma.little@lct.education](mailto:emma.little@lct.education)

***Together we can help your  
child to feel happy and  
successful at school***



***Attendance Matters  
Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow.***