



Evelina Hospital School

Attendance Policy

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Signed:		Governor



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1.0 Aims

Evelina Hospital School is a highly specialist educational setting. Our pupils' health needs, the clinical environment, and the unpredictable nature of hospital life mean that traditional models of attendance cannot be applied in the same way they would be in a mainstream school. As such, our attendance policy has been developed to reflect the realities of providing education within a hospital, ensuring that expectations are both meaningful and appropriate for the children we support.

Children attending Evelina Hospital School often face extremely challenging circumstances. The majority of our pupils are inpatients receiving ongoing medical treatment, which can have both physical and psychological effects. This attendance policy, and our approach to coding attendance, reflects these realities. We recognise that there will be valid reasons and times when a child is unable to engage in learning. These may include, but are not limited to: medical appointments, clinical observations, meetings with practitioners, the effects of medication, and the emotional impact of being in hospital and adapting to illness.

However, we remain committed to being an integral part of each child's education and to providing high-quality teaching and learning opportunities whenever possible.

2.0 Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#) •

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

However, it should be noted that most policies and school-based legislation relates to mainstream school and not all aspects of the policies can be applied to our specific hospital setting.

This policy also takes into account the following:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

3.3 The SLT

The SLT is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff are recording attendance data accurately.
- Having an oversight of data analysis.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.

3.4 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents and clinical staff about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents and home schools to key teachers in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.5 Parents/Carers of pupils at the Evelina Hospital School

We understand the challenges that can arise for the parents and carers of a child with a chronic medical or mental health condition. We therefore look to work with parents and carers and support them to ensure their child attends every day/timetabled session when they can.

3.6 Pupils at the Evelina Hospital School

We recognise the challenges our pupils face as a result of their medical needs. We deeply value and respect the determination and resilience they show by attending school during hospital admissions, and we welcome them into the classroom whenever their health and treatment schedules allow.

We also understand that siblings we teach may experience emotional strain due to the difficult circumstances they are in. At the Evelina Hospital School, we acknowledge these challenges and work closely with pupils to support pupils to attend school when they can. We employ a range of strategies to help them build confidence and experience in attending school.

4.0 Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register



We maintain an attendance register that includes all pupils admitted to the Evelina London Children’s Hospital as well as day patients attending clinics at the hospital.. In exceptional cases, siblings may also be added to this register. The register is managed through our MIS database.

Due to the unique nature of our school, the attendance register at Evelina Hospital School is updated daily. Pupils are added or removed as new patients are admitted, readmitted, or discharged from hospital.

Attendance is recorded for both morning and afternoon sessions. If a pupil is unable to participate in a lesson for medical reasons—such as appointments, observations, feeling unwell, recovery from procedures, or the emotional impact of illness (including for siblings)—an ‘M’ code will be entered. If siblings are unable to attend school due to illness, an I code will be recorded. A table detailing the attendance codes used can be found in Appendix 1.

As outlined in Section 2, most pupils attending Evelina Hospital School are dual registered, meaning their home school also records attendance when they engage in learning here. All entries in the attendance register, stored in the MIS database, will be retained until the individual turns 25, unless there is a safeguarding-related record, in which case we keep the record indefinitely. If a child is deceased, all records are removed.

4.2 Unplanned absence

For pupils who are regularly attending the Evelina Hospital School classrooms, we ask that parents/carers notify the school of the reason for any unplanned absence on the first day by 9:15am, or as soon as reasonably possible, by contacting the school’s administrative staff.

If there are concerns regarding a pupil’s attendance, we will inform parents/carers and any professionals involved in the pupil’s care so that we can work collaboratively to provide support.

4.3 Lateness and punctuality

At our hospital school, we welcome pupils for learning either in the classroom or at their bedside, whenever their clinical treatment permits.

4.4 Reporting to parents/carers

In line with the DfE expectation to report to parents and carers on their child’s attendance, Evelina Hospital School addresses any attendance concerns through daily communication with parents and carers. Details of these discussions are recorded in our liaison notes on the Evelina Hospital School database. Attendance of long-term pupils is reported to the home school as part of our regular and ongoing communication.

5.0 Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

As outlined in Section 2, due to the nature of our school, children attending are either receiving hospital treatment or are siblings of children receiving hospital treatment and therefore unable to attend their home schools. Consequently, children attending Evelina Hospital School will not be in a position to request approval for term-time

absence. All such applications will be managed by the home school when the child, or the sibling of the child, is ready to be discharged.

6.0 Attendance Monitoring

As previously stated, pupils admitted to the hospital sites comprising Evelina Hospital School are not obliged to attend school; however, they are encouraged and supported to do so by the Evelina Hospital School teaching team and the multidisciplinary teams within the different hospitals. When a patient or their parent/carer is reluctant to engage for reasons not related to the child's medical or mental health status, this is explored during daily handover meetings with nursing teams, daily site meetings, and, when necessary, at multi-disciplinary and psycho-social meetings at each site. This provides further context and informs any planning considered necessary to support a pupil and their parent/carer to engage with education in the broadest sense during a period of hospital admission. Attendance is monitored through daily discussions between parents/carers, the pupil, the teaching team, and link teacher to address obstacles to attendance. All liaison notes are recorded on the EHS MIS.

7.0 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every four years by the Senior Leadership Team. The policy will be approved by the full governing board.

8.0 Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies:

Admissions

Behaviour

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Code

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil received education during the morning session.
\	Present (pm)	Pupil received education during the afternoon session.
M	Medical appointment (inpatients only)	If an in-patient is unable to be taught a session due to medical related circumstances including (but not limited by): medical appointments, clinical observations, meetings with practitioners, the effects of medication, and the emotional impact of being in hospital and adapting to illness.
I	Illness (siblings only)	If a sibling is attending our classrooms and are unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental) then an I code will be recorded.