



**WESTBOURNE
SCHOOL**

EP4 Attendance policy

Date reviewed:	February 2024	Policy:	Attendance policy
Review due:	February 2025	Reviewed by:	Kate Martin

Version	Date	Updated By
1.0	September 2018	Leo Guy
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3.0	October 2020	Jason Craig
4.0	October 2022	Paige Bennett
4.2	October 2023	Kate Martin
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Attendance policy

At Westbourne School, we pride ourselves on offering a broad and balanced curriculum which is adapted to meet the individual needs of each learner. By creating a blend of vocational and non-vocational learning opportunities, as well as an enriched curriculum of cultural and life-skills opportunities, we strive to ensure that each learner achieves success, regardless of what form it may take.

Westbourne School embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all and aims to provide an environment where all learners feel safe, valued and welcome, by adhering to a trauma-informed model of practice and following the Ask, Accept, Develop neurodiversity framework. We have a robust learner-voice model in place and endeavour to support learners to find their own way to communicate and overcome barriers they face.

We believe that for a learner to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is important. Many of our learners have poor attendance prior to joining Westbourne School, and some have not been in an educational setting for a period of time. As a team, we work with parents/carers and students to improve this with pastoral support, communication and a clear approach to attendance expectations.

Each term Westbourne School will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets as a whole school, as well as reviewing individual learner's attendance on a regular basis and creating individual action plans where there is a drop of 5% or more, or where a learner's attendance is not rising in line with other improvement markers. Westbourne School will review its procedures for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

Every opportunity will be used to convey to learners and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance **(Appendix 1 and 2)**.

Westbourne School has adopted the iSAMS application for recording and monitoring school attendance and follow the national codes to record attendance information **(Appendix 3)**.

School attendance is subject to Education Law and Westbourne School's Attendance policy is written

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to reflect the law and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (**Appendix 4**).

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Daily absence procedure

The procedure for recording absence on a daily basis is outlined in Westbourne School's Learner Attendance Flowchart (**Appendix 5**). Any learner who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Principal, Head of Education, Assistant Headteacher or staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as *unauthorised*.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.45 am. The registers will remain open for 45 minutes. Any learner arriving after this time will be marked as late, arriving after registration has closed, unless there is an acceptable explanation, i.e. transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.30 pm and the registers will close at 2:00 pm. Learners arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated, for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Y codes

These codes are used in circumstances such as school closure or transport issues. Although these codes are recorded for statistical purposes, they will have no adverse effect on learner attendance.

First day of absence

The School Administrator/Family Liaison Officers will be informed by form tutors, SLT or pastoral staff that a learner is absent. The School Administrator or Family Liaison officers will then contact parents/carers by telephone to ascertain the reason for absence; this information will be electronically recorded on iSAMS with the appropriate absence code. If relevant, the learner's Social Worker, etc. will be informed as necessary. The placing Local Authority will also be informed of any prolonged absence immediately, if part of a PEP plan.

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Day two of absence onwards

For learners without authorised absence the School Administrator or Family Liaison Officer will again telephone parents/carers requesting them to contact the school. Social Workers (if appropriate) and the placing Local Authority will also be informed.

Continuing absence

In the first instance, the Assistant Head Teacher (Bridge or Gateway site) will contact parents/carers to offer support and agree targets/strategies to support attendance. The Assistant Head Teacher will work with staff to help identify reasons for absence. If low attendance continues, a home visit or a request for parents/carers and learner to attend school for a meeting and discuss targets and strategies to return to school will be agreed.

Ten days of absence

For any learner who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days, the School Administrator/ Family Liaison officer will notify the Local Authority of extended absence and mark this as a potential safeguarding concern. A Sleuth safeguarding concern will be raised by the Family Liaison Officer regarding the learner's attendance. The DSL and Family Liaison Officer will arrange a home visit. If needed, a Professionals Meeting will be arranged with the Local Authority SEN Officer, parents/carers and other relevant agencies.

Frequent absence

It is the responsibility of the Family Liaison Officers to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a learner begins to develop a pattern of absences, Westbourne School will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers. Once medical concerns have been eliminated the same procedure as 'Ten days of absence' will be followed.

Whole school attendance is analysed every half term. At the end of the October half term is the first instance at which parents/carers will be informed of any attendance concerns:

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A welcome back

It is important on return from an absence that all learners are made to feel welcome. Where appropriate a reintegration meeting is held and a contract of attendance agreed by parents/carers and learner. This will include ensuring that the learner is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students. A reduced timetable may be offered for up to 2 weeks for learners who are anxious about returning to school. A clear phased reintegration will be agreed between school and parents.

Absence notes / Emails

Notes / emails received from parents/carers explaining absence are kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the learner that may require further investigation, then the notes are retained for a longer period.

Promoting attendance

Westbourne School will use interim reports, Annual Reviews and as they arise, opportunities to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their child receives their education.

Holidays in term time

Holidays during term time are not allowed. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a learner's potential achievement. Westbourne School will not consider any holidays in term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers must inform the school of any holiday arranged, by completing a leave of absence request form.

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Safeguarding Children in Education

Child missing from education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The school Safeguarding policy gives clear guidelines on how the school should deal with children who go missing from education. Staff should follow the procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education or home, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

Westbourne School's Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place for children who go missing from education and care, particularly on repeat occasions. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. The Law requires all schools to have an admission register and with the exception of schools where all learners are boarders, an attendance register. All learners must be placed on both registers.

Westbourne School must inform their Local Authority of any learner who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school systems, e.g. home education
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school which they are registered
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he or their parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- have been permanently excluded.

The Local Authority must be notified when a school is to remove a learner from its register under the above circumstances. This should be done as soon as the grounds for removal are met, but no later than removing the learner's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty, so that the authorities can, as part of their duty to identify children of compulsory school age who are

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missing education, follow up with any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

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Westbourne School must inform the Local Authority of any learner who fails to attend school regularly, or have been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the Local Authority (or in default of such agreement, at intervals determined by the Secretary of State).

Please refer to school policy on Missing

Children. This policy will be reviewed

annually.

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Appendix 1 – Student absence procedure letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE. Student absence procedures

School absence

Under Government guidelines for school attendance, less than 85% will be classed as 'persistent absence'. Please let us all work together to ensure your child's attendance improves as we aim to reach the required 95%. Good attendance ensures students reach their full potential, both academically and socially, leading to positive life chances in the future.

If your child is absent?

Please telephone the school as soon as possible, providing an explanation of your child's absence and potential date of return. You can contact the School Administrator at any time on 01623 392430 during your child's absence to keep the school updated.

If your child has an appointment?

Please advise the school of the date, time and nature of the appointment. Please try to keep appointments outside of school hours where ever possible. However if this is unavoidable try to book them for early morning, lunchtime or as close to the end of the school day as possible. Always return your child to school as soon as possible after an appointment. Please provide evidence of any appointments – such as a copy of confirmation letters or screenshot of appointment confirmations.

Holidays

The school's policy is **not to authorise** any holiday time during term time, unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Our policy is based on guidance from the Local Authority to reduce absenteeism (particularly due to holidays taken in term time), and the effect that missing lessons has on academic achievement. If you plan or intend to take a holiday during Westbourne's term time, please complete and return a holiday request form to the school administrator or Family Liaison Officer.

We appreciate your continued support in this matter.

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Appendix 2 – What's your attendance?

97%

Less than 6 days absence

Excellent attendance! Well done. You are aiming to get the best outcomes. Good attendance ensures you reach your full potential, both academically and socially, leading to positive life chances in the future.

10 days absence

You are likely to achieve good outcomes and ensure you reach your full potential, both academically and socially, leading to positive life chances in the future. However, you could improve your attendance.

95%

90%

19 days absence

You are missing almost four weeks of school. This is equal to half a day's absence each week. It is going to be difficult for you to achieve your best and reach your full potential.

29 days absence

You are missing six weeks of school. It will be very difficult for you to keep up with your work and you are unlikely to achieve your best. We will be in contact with your Parent/Carer to monitor your attendance.

85%

80%

38 days absence

You are missing eight weeks of school. To help you reach your full potential we will work with your Parent/Carer and the Local Authority to increase your attendance. Failure to increase your attendance may result in the school contacting the Education Welfare Officer.

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Appendix 3 - Registration codes

Westbourne School uses iSAMS to maintain student attendance. The following codes are used to record attendance information:



Attendance Code Definitions



Code	Attendance Codes	Description
/ \	Present	To record sessions of attendance in school
L	Late (but arrive before register close)	Late arrival before the register has closed
Code	Off Site Activity	Description
B	Educated off site	Off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school (not at home)
D	Dual Registered	Scheduled to attend another school at which they are registered
J	Interview	An interview with prospective employers or another educational establishment
P	Supervised Sporting Activity	Supervised and approved activity by the school
V	Educational visit or trip	Attendance at an organised trip or visit (including residential trips organised by the school or supervised trip of an educational nature by an organisation approved by the school)
W	Work Experience	Work experience for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Failure to attend work experience placement must be recorded using the appropriate code
Code	Authorised Absence	Description
C	Absent with permission	Authorised by the school - exceptional circumstances
E	Exclusion	Excluded (but no alternative provision made)
H	Agreed Family Holiday	Holiday authorised by the school
I	Illness	(Not medical or dental)
M	Medical or Dental Appointment	Medical or dental appointments (should not be used for periods of illness)
R	Religious Observance	Authorised absence for religious observance
S	Study Leave	Study leave to be granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to come into school to revise
T	Traveller Absence	To be used when traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
Code	Unauthorised Absence	Description
G	Unauthorised Holiday	Holiday not authorised by the School
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Temporary code to be used when not aware of the reason for absence. Code should be amended once the reason has been established
O	Unauthorised Absence	Absent from school without authorisation
U	Late (arrived after register has closed)	Arrived after registration has closed. Schools should be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation
X	Not required to be in School	This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend (not to be used for Covid)
Y	Partial or Forced Closure/ Transport/Exceptional Circumstances	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. School site (or part of it) is closed due to an unavoidable cause or where there is an issue with the transport provided by the school or local authority. Can also be used where the pupil is in custody for a period of less than four months
Z	Pupil not on admission register	This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that it has been agreed that the pupils will attend
#	Planned closure	Planned or partial closure (school, holiday, bank holiday, INSET, polling)

Part Time Timetables/Transition

Those pupils on part time timetables or transitioning into school should be marked as present for the sessions they are attending in school. They should then be marked as C for when they are not attending, unless there is supervision in place from the school, ADL or something similar, in which case this would be a B code.

Appendix 4 - The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- To their age, ability and aptitude
- To any special needs he may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school. Register and Admission Roll keeping, the legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Student Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

- Unauthorised absence
- Authorised absence
- Approved educational activity.

Unauthorised absence

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

Authorised absence

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

Approved educational activity

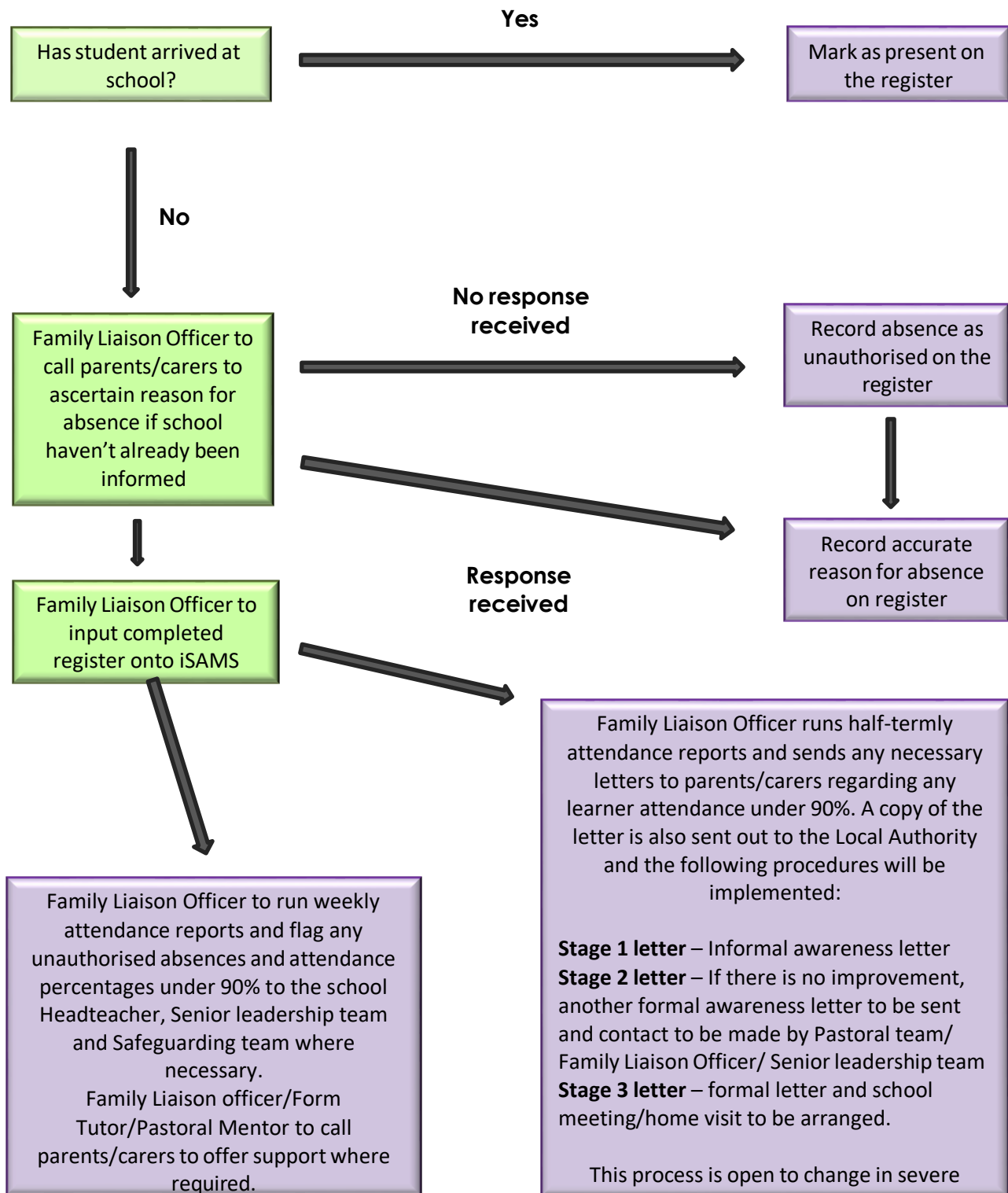
This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of Westbourne School.

Note: Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- Work experience placements
- field trips and educational visits
- sporting activities
- link courses or approved education off site
- dual registration will be recorded as such.

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Appendix 5 – Learner attendance flowchart



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Appendix 6 – Stage 1 attendance letter

Dear (name),

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our learners we monitor attendance on a termly basis. We are therefore writing to you as (learner's name) attendance for the (Spring/Summer/Autumn) term is (number)%; this is due to mainly unauthorised attendance and has started Stage 1 of our Attendance Policy procedures.

Whilst any child may be absent from school due to illness, we recognise that sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for a variety of reasons. We wish to support you and assist your child in establishing a regular attendance pattern at school. You can contact the school's tutor, Family Liaison Team or myself to discuss any strategies or support you may require.

Please find enclosed guidelines on Student Absence and What's Your Attendance for your information.

At this stage, we will not be looking to take this further and this letter is purely to make you aware. We look forward to working together to improve (learner's name) attendance.

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Appendix 7 – Stage 2 attendance letter

Dear (name),

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our learners we monitor attendance on a termly basis. We are therefore writing to you as (learner's name) attendance for the (Spring/Summer/Autumn) term is (number)%, which has started Stage 2 of our Attendance Policy procedures.

(Learner's name) attendance is now at risk of impacting on his/her/their outcomes. As a school, we are committed to ensuring the best possible opportunities for all our learners and attendance is one of the key factors in ensuring this happens.

If (learner's name) is still reluctant to attend due to any specific reasons, please can you contact the school and either ask for their Form Tutor, or myself as Headteacher, to discuss further.

Please be aware that should your child's attendance deteriorate further, we will pass this on to the Local Authority Attendance Officer who may visit you at home, or consider taking enforcement proceedings. We will also organise either a school meeting or home visit to discuss any concerns

Please find enclosed guidelines on Student Absence and What's Your Attendance for your information. We look forward to working together to improve (child's name) attendance.

Yours sincerely,

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Appendix 8 – Stage 3 attendance letter

Dear (name),

Upon further analysis of our school attendance, (learner's name) attendance has not improved/deteriorated further. We are therefore beginning Stage 3 of our Attendance Policy procedure and writing to inform you that we want to organise a school meeting/home visit to identify and address any issues. Can I please take this opportunity to highlight that this is a supportive tool which aims to improve your child's attendance.

Continual low attendance for an extended period of time will have a detrimental effect on the social, emotional and educational outcomes that (learner's name) could achieve. It is therefore paramount that we formalise our approach to your child's attendance moving forward.

Your child's form tutor, (name), will contact you shortly to organise a meeting with yourselves and (name, staff member job title). There will also be a member of the schools SLT present during such meeting.

Please be aware that should your child's attendance deteriorate further, we will pass this on to the Local Authority Attendance Officer who may visit you at home or consider taking enforcement proceedings.

We look forward to working together to improve (learner's name)

attendance. Yours sincerely,

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