



eastbury  
primary  
school  
*Succeeding together*

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved: Summer 2023

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## 1. Introduction

At Eastbury Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils receive the highest quality of education and are able to achieve their full potential. Excellent attendance and punctuality is a key pre-requisite for achieving this.

The target attendance for all pupils registered at this school is 97%.

## 2. Responsibilities of Parents/Cares

The school works in close partnership with parents/carers to achieve excellent school attendance and punctuality. The responsibilities of in relation to attendance and punctuality are set out in the Home-School Agreement.

The law states that parents have responsibilities for ensuring their child attends school regularly. Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996).

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school on time and are picked up promptly at the end of the day.

If a child is ill, parents should contact the school on the first day of a pupil's absence. They should state the reason for their child's absence and also the date they are expected to return to school, whenever possible. If there is no contact, then the school Attendance Officer will make contact with the parents on the first day of absence.

All routine medical and dental appointments should be made outside school time. When it is essential to have a non-routine appointment during the school day, evidence (such as an appointment card or hospital letter) should be shown in **advance** to the Office Staff. There may be times when the parent/carer will be asked to provide further medical evidence for their child's absence.

Parents should ensure that the child is brought to school before the appointment and returned to school afterwards.

## 3. Punctuality

Excellent attendance includes pupils being on time for school, every day.

*Every day that all class members are in on time the class is awarded a letter towards spelling 'Every Second Counts'. Once they have all the letters the class will be awarded with golden time.*

### Start of the day

The playground gates open at 8:45am and are closed promptly at 8:55am. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is in school before 8:45am. Any

children coming after this time are late and must enter through the designated late attendance entrance.

If a child is late, the following procedure is followed:

- Late children must be signed in **by the parent** with a reason for late attendance. The time of arrival must also be recorded.
- If a child is late more than twice during a week or there is a pattern of lateness over a longer period, then a punctuality letter is sent home to parents.
- If a child is late twice again the following week this will trigger a 2<sup>nd</sup> punctuality letter.
- If a child continues to be late and there is no improvement in their punctuality this will trigger a meeting with the Attendance Officer and, where appropriate, a member of SLT.
- If a child still continues to be late a referral will be made to the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer.

#### End of the day

The school day ends at 3.05pm for Reception children, 3.15pm for Key Stage 1 and 3.15pm for Key Stage 2.

When a parent does not collect their child within five minutes of those times, the parent is deemed to be late. If a child is late being picked up, the following procedure is followed:

- From 15:10 for Reception pupils and 15:20 for Years 1 to 6. The Parents are required to collect their child from the late room, the entrance of which is in the main car park at the front of the building.
- Late children are registered when they enter the late room. The time that they are picked up is also recorded.
- If a child has not been collected by 3:35pm, then the child is taken to the after-school club (Eagles Club) and a charge is made for providing childcare outside statutory provision (the charge is the same as that for the after-school club £10.50).
- If a parent is repeatedly late in picking up their child, a meeting is arranged with the School Officer responsible for attendance and, where appropriate, a member of SLT.
- If a child continues to be collected late a referral is made to the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer.

#### **4. Reporting sickness**

If your child is unwell, you should report this by 08:50am using the School's Study Bugs app noting your child's name and the reason for the absence.

If you are unable to access the Study Bugs app, please notify the school office who will help you. Or you may call the office and leave a message stating your child's name, class and details of the sickness.

#### **5. Rewards for attendance**

There are reward systems in place at the school for good attendance:

- Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates are handed out to children for 100% attendance during Autumn, Spring and Summer terms
- An Attendance trophy for the class with the best attendance that week across the whole school
- An Attendance bear for the class with the best attendance that week in each phase (years 1&2, 3&4 and 5&6).

#### **6. Holidays/Leave of Absence**

Parents who request absences in term time must complete the form at Appendix 2.

It is expected that parents who plan leave during school holiday periods. Holidays **will not be authorised** in term time and may incur a fixed penalty notice. A leave of absence for exceptional circumstances may be authorised by the Head teacher for a maximum of 3 days. Any leave of absence exceeding 3 days will not be authorised and may incur a fixed penalty notice. All fixed penalty notices are discussed with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer before being issued.

Parents have a right to request an appeal against the school's decision to issue a fixed penalty notice. The procedure for the appeal is as follows:

- 1) Parent receives the fixed penalty notice and contacts the Headteacher in writing to request an appeal providing reasons/evidence for the request.
- 2) The Headteacher will then consider the evidence of the appeal and a decision will be made accordingly.
- 3) The local authority is then informed of the outcome.
- 4)

## **7. Persistent absence**

Persistent absence is where children's attendance falls below set thresholds. In those instances, the following stages are used to resolve the situation (unless there is a valid reason for the attendance level, such as a prolonged period in hospital):

### **Stage One**

If attendance is between **85-92%**, a letter is sent to the parent notifying them that the school is monitoring the attendance levels of that pupil, stating that there needs to be an improvement in the pupil's attendance. The letter might also ask the parent to provide medical evidence.

A meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, School Officer responsible for attendance and the parents to discuss any issues and agree a way forward is arranged. Where appropriate, support is offered from the Family Liaison Officer.

### **Stage Two**

When a pupil's attendance does not improve following action at Stage One or attendance falls below 85%, a referral is made to the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer. Parents are informed of this referral.

At this stage appropriate action is taken by the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer to resolve the situation. This may include:

- direct work with the pupil and family
- referral to other agencies
- arranging suitable support to help the pupil in making a return to full attendance.
- legal proceedings under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Education Act 1996 and the Children Act 1989. Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents. There is an appeals process for parents who have received and contest a fixed penalty notice.

## **8. School Responsibilities**

### **The Local Governing Board**

The Local Governing Board has responsibility for the school's attendance strategy and for approving the Attendance and Punctuality Policy every two years.

The Local Governing Board will receive updates on attendance at least termly.

## **Designated member of SLT and the School Officer responsible for attendance**

The member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with responsibility for attendance is the School Business Manager.

The School Business Manager's responsibilities are to:

- ensure that the school meets the legal requirements for all aspects of school attendance and punctuality
- recommend targets for attendance to SLT and the Local Governing Board, and monitor them
- ensure staff training on attendance
- report regularly to the Headteacher, Governors and parents about attendance issues and figures
- recommend to the Headteacher whether to authorise or not authorise term-time absences
- oversee the day-to-day responsibilities of the School Officer responsible for attendance.
- oversee the operation of the Attendance and Punctuality Routines at Appendix 1

The responsibilities of the Schools Officer responsible for attendance are to:

- produce weekly reports on attendance and punctuality
- produce a comprehensive half-termly report on attendance, showing trends over time and setting out the attendance of vulnerable groups
- monitor trends in attendance and advise SLT on issues arising
- manage reward systems for attendance (see section 3)
- recommend whether term time absences should be authorised and informing parents of the decision
- liaise with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer as required
- liaise with the school's Family Liaison Officer as required
- send out letters on attendance and punctuality and meet with parents (together with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer, Family Liaison Officer, School Business Manager or other member of SLT, as appropriate)
- manage the procedure for persistent absences (see section 5)
- ensure that the online registers are correct and show the reason for absence
- update all electronic and paper records in relation to attendance and punctuality
- follow the procedures outlined on appendix 1

## **The Class Teacher**

The Class Teacher has a vital role to play in promoting excellent attendance and punctuality. The responsibilities of the class teacher are:

- to ensure that he/she is present in the classroom from 8.45am

- completing the online registers by 9.00am in the morning and by 12.55pm (Reception to year 2), 1.25pm (years 3 and 4) or 1.55pm (years 5 and 6) in the afternoon each day
- to raise any child protection concerns relating to attendance or punctuality with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Discussing attendance issues with children during pupil conferencing meetings
- Discussing attendance and punctuality issues with parents, and sharing attendance figures at Parents' Evenings

### **Inclusion Team**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), the Pupil Premium Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the EAL lead teacher will monitor the attendance of the following groups of pupils:

- SEN support
- Children with an EHC plan
- EAL children
- Children for whom there are safeguarding concerns
- Looked-after children
- Disadvantaged children

They are responsible for working in conjunction with class teachers, the School Officer responsible for attendance, the Family Liaison Officer and external agencies to promote excellent attendance amongst these groups and to address any underlying issues

## Appendix 1: Attendance and Punctuality Routines

Daily	Weekly	Each Half Term	Each Term
<b>SLT's Role &amp; Responsibility (including School Business Manager)</b>			
Ensure gates are closed at 8.55 am and support Admin Officers (AO) on late door.	Attendance bear given to class with best attendance in certain year groups	Communicate progress in achieving attendance targets to parents in newsletter.	Attendance Assembly to hand out bronze/silver/gold certificates for 100% attendance. Attendance Panda.
	Monitor weekly attendance data at SLT meetings and visit classes where attendance is below expectation.		
	Hold parent meetings as arranged by AO		
	Attendance trophy to class with highest attendance across the school	Attendance report presented to Local Governing Board	
<b>School Officer responsible for attendance Role &amp; Responsibility</b>			
<u>First day Absences</u> Phone calls to parents of pupils who are absent and reasons noted on SIMS.	Complete Attendance Return for Whole School/Year groups/Class and share with staff	Complete PA log and Reason Code Analysis	Attendance Update whole School letters and accompanying Attendance Summaries.
<u>Second/Third day absences</u> Phone calls to parents of pupils who are absent and have not provided a reason.	Send out N code letters on a Friday	Analyse data and arrange meetings with parents	
<u>Inform SLT, FLO and SENCO</u> of a child who has been absent for 3 days <u>without</u> contact from the parents/carers	Send out letters to parents regarding attendance & punctuality concerns.	Letters of concern/improvement/ to Parents	Provide attendance Data to teachers for Parents Evenings
<u>Five Days Absence</u> <u>Inform SLT, PSA and Designated SLT</u> for Attendance if a child has had a <u>five</u> consecutive days absent even if reasons are given from parents/carers	Discuss with SLT absence requests received by parents and inform parents of decision. Agree and issue fixed penalty notices in line with local authority	Provide SLT with attendance figures for newsletter	Produce and share comprehensive termly attendance report

Record children picked up late from school. Refer persistent lates to Partnership Learning Attendance Officer.			
<b>Class Teacher</b>			
Ensure online registers are completed by 9.10 am and 12.55/ 1.55 pm.		Discuss attendance with pupils at pupil conferencing meetings	Discuss attendance with parents at Parents' Evenings