



eastbury  
primary  
school  
*Succeeding together*

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved: Spring 2025

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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. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

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

## 2. Aims

We aim and work towards ensuring that all pupils value their education and rarely miss a day at school. No groups of pupils should be disadvantaged by low attendance. We aim to have exceptionally high levels of attendance for all children.

- Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled to
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence

Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality at the beginning of a school day and to lessons. We also work with families to ensure they collect their children on time from school.

## 3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

#### 4. Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

The school works in close partnership with parents/carers to achieve excellent school attendance and punctuality. The responsibilities 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.

Ofsted considers the effectiveness of school's attendance figures by:

- Overall absence and persistent absence rates for all pupils, and for different groups, in relation to national figures for all pupils
- The extent to which low attenders are improving their attendance over time and whether attendance is consistently low (in the lowest 10%)
- Punctuality in arriving at school and at lessons

If a child is ill, parents should **contact the school on the first day of a pupil's absence followed by daily update calls for unplanned absence**. They should state the reason for their child's absence and also the date they are expected to return to school. If the school receives no call, the school will call home as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> day calls to gain contact and reasons for absence.

**All** routine medical and dental appointments should be **made outside school time**. When it is essential to have an **emergency** 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. All absence from school will be recorded as un-authorised until adequate evidence is given to the school.

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

## 5. Punctuality

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

If all class members are in on time each day, the class is awarded a letter towards spelling '**Every Second Counts**'. Once they have all the letters the class will be awarded with a specific reward during the school day.

### 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 8:55am. Any children coming after this time are late and must enter through the Late Gate entrance, by the front office entrance, which is open from 8.55am-9.05am.

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

- Late children must be signed in at the Late Gate **by the parent** with a reason for late attendance. The time of arrival must also be recorded.

The attendance lead will track and monitor children who are late: -

- First 4 lates accumulated within half a term, by a family, will result in a letter being sent home, along with a phone call from the attendance officer to offer support to families. (Appendix 5)
- A total of 8 lates will result in a phone call home from the FLO/AHT to offer support to families.
- A total 16 lates will result in face to face meetings with SLT.
- If further lates are accumulated, Georgina Stoller (PL admissions link advisor will be involved).
- Any child who arrives to school after 9:30am, a 'U' code will be issued, this will be tracked and monitored by the admissions officer. The 'U' code counts as an un-authorised absence and can be included when considering a penalty notice for irregular attendance.

### Daily Absence routine

**On a first day of absence:** no messages have been received from the parents/carers, first day calling will be initiated to gain the reason for the child not attending school. If contact is made and a date for return is given, no further call will be made till the day of expected return. The reason for absence will also be recorded with evidence taken from the parent/carer for files. Authorised absence will be determined by the reason for absence and the evidence given. All absence is recorded un-authorised until suitable evidence is received from the parent/carer.

**On a second day of absence:** if no contact was made on the first day a second call home will be made. If contact cannot be made by phone, then all contacts held on school files (Bromcom) will be used to gain communication (family members, emails). A message will be sent stating:

Dear Parent/Carer

We are trying to make contact with you due to your child being absent from school. A call has been made using the contacts on our system. If we are unable to make contact or hear from you by the end of today 4pm, a home visit will be made tomorrow (third day of absence with no contact) to ensure there are no issues and support is not needed.

Regards

Mrs Trench

Safeguard Lead

**Third day of absence:** no contact has been made; a home visit will be made by two members of staff. If no contact is made, the situation of absence will be relayed to the Attendance Officer who will also conduct a visit and try to gain contact. Until contact is made this will be classed as a child missing in education.

See Home Visit Policy for details:

#### End of the day

The school day ends at 3.05pm for Reception children, 3.15pm for all other year groups (1-6).

The class teacher will wait on the playground for 5 minutes for children to be collected. When a parent does not collect their child within ten minutes of the times, the parent/carers is deemed to be late. If a child is late being picked up, the following procedure is followed:

- If a child has not been collected within the five minutes, the class teacher will take the child to the Late Room, where a call to the parent/carer will be made.
- At the Late Room the child will wait for collection for ten minutes and calls home to parents will be made. If no collection within that time, children will be taken to the after-school provision (Eagles) and a charge is made for providing childcare outside statutory provision (the charge is the same as that for the after-school provision).
- If a parent is repeatedly late in picking up their child, a letter will be sent home leading to a meeting with the school Family Liaison Officer and eventually a meeting with the School Attendance Office and the Senior Leadership Team.
- If a child continues to be collected late a referral is made to the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer.

## 6. Rewards for attendance

Good attendance is promoted throughout the school. We engage with families to ensure that they understand the value of ensuring that their children attend every day. Letters, texts, parent information evenings, newsletters and the website all promote an ethos of high expectations and standards of attendance and punctuality. Pupils are rewarded for good, and just as importantly, improved attendance and punctuality.

Initiatives such as:

- Certificates, a Virtual Attendance coin (entered into a raffle) and a small gift reward are handed out to children for 100% attendance during Autumn, Spring and Summer terms by the attendance panda
- 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).
- An 'Attendance reward' held at the end of each half term as a celebration for individual children who have achieved 100% attendance
- An End Of Year Raffle, is held, with Mrs Shepherd randomly selecting ten winners to receive a special prize.
- 100% Attendance Entire Year Reward, with children invited to a Special Film and Popcorn Event in the hall to celebrate their amazing achievement

## 7. Leave of Absence

It is expected that parents plan holidays when the school is closed. Holidays **will not be authorised** in term time and will incur a fixed penalty notice (fine). A leave of absence for **exceptional** circumstances may be authorised by the Head Teacher and need to be requested in advance for consideration. All fixed penalty notices are discussed with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer before being issued.

Parents will be asked to give evidence for any leave from school. The evidence requested will be determined on each individual basis.

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.

## 8. 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

When attendance falls beneath 92% it will be monitored closely to ensure it does not fall further below this percentage.

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 will also ask the parent to provide any evidence for any absences that have not already been evidenced.

If improvements are not made following the first letter being sent within two weeks, a phone call will be arranged by the Family Liaison Officer and the parents to discuss any issues and agree a way forward where appropriate support is offered.

### Stage Two

When a pupil's attendance does not improve following action at Stage One or attendance continues to fall further, 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:

- a meeting with the PLT Officer.
- direct work with the pupil and family - A school booklet regarding lateness and time lost for learning will be given to the parent.
- 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.

## 9. 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 Attendance Team

The member's of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with responsibility for attendance are Deputy Headteacher - Attendance Champion, School Business Manager - Attendance Lead and Attendance Admin Officer.

The Attendance Champion'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
- liaising with the school DSL and MHFA to support with delicate or confidential situations

The Attendance Lead's responsibilities are to:

- oversee the day-to-day responsibilities of the School Attendance Team
- oversee the operation of the Attendance and Punctuality Routines at Appendix 1
- ensure wellbeing and mental health is considered when supporting and actioning

areas for pupil attendance. There might be extreme circumstances that families are dealing with and understanding from the school to support during these times might be needed

- Being a member of the Attendance Team

The responsibilities of the School Attendance Officer are to:

- produce a weekly overview 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
- liaise with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer as required
- liaise with the school's Family Support Worker as required
- send out letters on attendance and punctuality and meet with parents (together with the Partnership Learning Attendance Officer, Family Support Worker, School Business Manager or other member of SLT, as appropriate)
- Manage the procedure for persistent absences
- 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
- Conduct home visits (FLO & SLT support)

### Learning Leaders and Senior Leadership Group

- Promote good attendance and its ethos
- Devise motivational initiatives to improve year group and phase attendance
- Monitor absence and attendance
- Meet with pupils and parents of concern

(alongside the attendance lead)

### 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:

- Ensure that registers are accurately taken on Bromcom
- Support the ethos of good attendance
- Monitor patterns of attendance and punctuality, informing SLT, Safeguarding Team and phase leads with concerns.
- Use provided data enable pupils to engage with their own attendance profile
- Discussing attendance issues with children
- Discussing attendance and punctuality issues with parents in the first instance, and sharing attendance figures at Parents' Evenings

### Admissions Process

- Admissions Lead will check the SAMS system on a weekly basis to ensure families who have been allocated a place at EPS, are contacted within 10 working days.
- Admissions lead will organise and complete an admissions interview with the family.
- Admission lead will allow at least x3 working days' notice for class teachers before a child is admitted into EPS.
- Admission lead will email class teachers information collated during admission interview to ensure class teacher has much information as possible before the child starts at EPS.
- Admissions lead will organise a phonics and /or EAL assessment with the EAL lead, if required.
- Admissions lead will ensure any medical needs are assessed appropriately, e.g any medical training that needs to be undertaken before the new pupil starts at EPS. This information is also passed onto the class teacher x2 days prior the pupil starting at EPS.
- Pupils requiring medication while attending school will be assessed with relevant steps liaising with the school nurse to ensure care plans are in place before they start the school.

### Inclusion Team

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), the Inclusion Lead, the Pupil Premium Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Designated Teacher 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 the class teachers, the School Attendance Officer, the Family Support Worker 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                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SLT's Role & Responsibility (including School Business Manager)                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                         |                                                                                |                                                                                      |
| Ensure gates are closed at 8.55am and support Attendance Team (AT) in the late room.                                                                                                                                                                                   | 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. |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Monitor weekly attendance data at SLT meetings and visit classes where attendance is below expectation. |                                                                                |                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Hold parent meetings as arranged by HT                                                                  |                                                                                |                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Attendance trophy to class with highest attendance across the school                                    | Attendance report presented to Local Governing Board                           |                                                                                      |
| School Attendance Team's Role & Responsibility                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                         |                                                                                |                                                                                      |
| <u>First Day Absences</u> Phone calls to parents of pupils who are absent and reasons noted on Bromcom.                                                                                                                                                                | 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 Day Absences</u><br>Phone calls to parents of pupils who are absent and have not provided a reason.<br>Use all contact details on file to gain communication. Send email/message notifying of home visit if no contact is made by 4pm (emails, relative n.o) | Send out N code letters on a Friday                                                                     | Analyse data fortnightly and arrange calls/meetings with parents               |                                                                                      |
| <u>Third Day Absences</u><br>Inform School business manager, Designated SLT for Attendance if a child has had                                                                                                                                                          | Send out letters to parents regarding attendance & punctuality concerns.                                | Letters of concern/improvement/ to Parents                                     | Provide attendance Data to teachers for Parents Evenings                             |

|                                                                                                                  |                      |                             |                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <u>three</u> consecutive days absent if no contact has been made. Home visit by FLO and DSL/SLT to be completed. |                      |                             |                                 |
|                                                                                                                  | Attendance Team meet | Provide SLT with attendance | Produce and share comprehensive |

|                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                        |                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Record children picked up late from school. Refer persistent lates to SLT and FLO. If persistent refer to PLT attendance officer. | and issue fixed penalty notices in line with local authority through PLT Officer. | figures for newsletter | termly attendance report                             |
| <b>Class Teacher</b>                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                        |                                                      |
| Ensure online registers are completed by 9.05 am and 1.00/1.25/1.55 pm.                                                           |                                                                                   |                        | Discuss attendance with parents at Parents' Evenings |