



EATON PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

At Eaton Primary School we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life. Missing out on lessons can leave children vulnerable to falling behind. It is also important to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities which may mean extra support in certain cases.

Eaton Primary School aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents, carers and the local community can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

The staff and school encourage good attendance and will liaise with partner agencies if and when appropriate. It is important that a conscientious attitude towards school attendance is fostered in prime carers from the very first term that children attend school.

The importance of establishing good habits of regular attendance cannot be over emphasised, and a pattern initiated and sustained throughout a child's school career. Patterns of poor attendance and punctuality can be indicative of different home circumstances and may be referred to pastoral care.

Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Roles

Responsibility

Headteacher

To monitor the attendance throughout school.
To raise the level of attendance of those identified as being at risk i.e. persistent non attendance.
The welfare of children in school (along with teaching staff).

Headteacher/Teachers

To monitor the attendance situation of individual children/ follow up attendance etc

School Office

To record all attendance onto SIMS (School Information Management System) and to produce regular reports regarding attendance to allow monitoring.

Governors

To keep a check on general situation of attendance

E.W.S. (Education Welfare Service)

Restructured Jan 2018

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) re-joined the Education Service in January 2018 after 3 years with the former Integrated Early Support Service. Due to re-structure, the service was

reduced from 10 FTE Education Welfare Officers (EWO) to 3 FT EWOs. The EWS now makes sure the Council meets its statutory duties around school attendance, however it **no longer does casework**. The EWS works closely with schools through guidance to enable them to manage their attendance and provide opportunities for all pupils to attend and learn. Due to the restructure of the EWS, schools can no longer refer cases of children with persistent absence to their service, resulting in schools having to make their own arrangements to investigate attendance issues.

New Structure

The Education Welfare Service delivers on the Statutory Duties of the Local Authority (LA):

- Identification of Children Missing Education (CME) - (see current CME Guidance and Procedures)
- Improving attendance via investigation/enforcement process
- School Attendance Orders
- Contribute to the Code of Conduct for Fixed Penalty Notices
- Assessment of Fixed Penalty Notice Warning requests
- Assessment and Guidance for Education Act 1996 (section 444) Parental Prosecution
- Child Performance/Employment Regulation (Child Licensing)
- Right to inspect Attendance Registers

The team is managed by Morag Bragger and each District has an allocated EWO to offer guidance and advice on attendance issues and the statutory duties of the LA. The team holds regular **EWS District Workshop Sessions** to provide advice and guidance on attendance issues and practise.

The Education Welfare Officers are:

Chester/Rural: Claire Billington(07584 206379)

Contact Morag Bragger – Senior Practice Lead

Council Offices, Wyvern House, The Drummer, Winsford CW7 1AH

Tel 01606 271532

Ellesmere Port/Neston 01606 275090

Winsford & Northwich 01606 275133

Child Licensing Officer 01606 275642

EWS Telephone: 01606 275759

Email: educationwelfare@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Aims and Objectives of the Attendance Policy

- To improve quality of school life.
- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'.
- To demonstrate to all that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.
- To involve the children more in their school attendance.
- To improve communication with parents/carers about regular school attendance.
- To ensure that all staff continue to take responsibility for the attendance of the children and to recognise the importance of class teachers in promoting and monitoring attendance.
- To promote regular attendance and punctuality by being vigilant and maintaining the school internal absence record.
- To ensure that a child's learning is not jeopardised by poor attendance.
- To maintain effective working relationships with Education Welfare Service and reporting of any attendance issues to them.

Targets of Attendance Policy

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring school attendance. This is carried out by daily register marking and input of all attendance onto SIMS. The registers are recorded weekly onto SIMS and the computer is backed up on a daily basis.
- To ensure that the above data is readily available for use by school managers and staff in conjunction with the Education Welfare Service who continue to carry out Register Inspections in schools.
- Senior Management Team to monitor and agree targets of attendance and agree strategies to improve attendance.
- To ensure that parents/carers are aware of the school policy aims.
- To review the policy on an annual basis.

Communication and Consultations

The Headteacher will review this policy and will make any changes in consultation with the Senior Management Team and Governors.

Parents/Carers are advised on policy and issues of attendance through various methods.

- School Website
- School Prospectus
- When children first start school
- Newsletters
- Parents'/Carers' Evenings
- Home School Agreements

The children are advised of the aims and expectations of the policy:

- In assemblies
- In the classroom

Procedures

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. (Children who start in Reception have a staggered, part-time intake for the first week of term)

There are two types of absence:

Authorised	Where the school approves the absence
Unauthorised	Where the school does not approve the absence.

It is expected that the parent/carer will provide an explanation at the start of the day on which the child is absent. If contact is not made by the parent on that day, the school will then contact the home of the child.

Identification and Referral

Attendance concerns are made by the class teacher, Bursar or Clerical Assistants and referred to the Headteacher. Regular checks are made on attendance. The register is analysed on a weekly basis to identify trends and attendance patterns. Reports are printed at the end of each month - % attendance, whole school summary, lateness, unauthorised absence and broken weeks. These are then analysed and referred if necessary. These monthly reports are held in the school office.

The Headteacher will then follow up the concern with the parent/carer initially by telephone, then letters home (including attendance percentage record), meetings with parents and if necessary, the setting of individual attendance targets. The school refers to the Cheshire West and Chester Council School Attendance Guidance Document.

If there is no sufficient improvement after initial contact, the parents/carers would be invited into school and the Headteacher would reinforce parental duty to ensure school attendance and offer support by providing links to other agencies.

Lateness

Pupils who are persistently late are disrupting their own education and that of others.

School begins at 8.55am and all pupils should be in at this time. School gates are closed at 8.55am, any pupils arriving after this time enter via the main entrance and their arrival time is recorded in the office. Arrival after 8.55am and before 9.10am, the official time when registers close in the morning (without prior knowledge) will result in a late mark against that pupil. Arrival after registers have closed will result in a code U (late after registers close with no authorised reason) which may result in a fixed penalty. Where a child is recorded as late on SIMS, the time and reason is noted, if known. The late mark report is produced by the attendance officer and any concerns referred to the Senior Management Team.

Registers close in the afternoon at 1.15 pm.

Procedure for Unknown Absence

If the absence of a child is unknown the teacher advises the school office by note to follow this up. A phone call is then made before 10am that day. This is continued until contact is made.

Unauthorised Absence

All the staff at Eaton Primary School are conscious to promote children's regular attendance and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. They are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness.

If there is persistent absence which has not been authorised by the Headteacher then the parents of the child will be invited for a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the issues that are impacting attendance. An action plan will be drawn up, referrals made if necessary e.g. school Health and an initiation of a CAF considered. All issues of attendance are now dealt with by the Governors and Headteacher in school.

Exceptional Circumstances for Absence from School

Family Respite

Family Crisis (Severe Medical Needs, Bereavement, Adoption etc)

Religious events

Examinations

Approved sporting activities

Urgent Medical Appointments.

Holidays in School Time

From 1st September 2013, the DfE announced important amendments to legislation regarding holidays in term time. In the year 2011 to 2012, 9.7% of all absences in England were due to parents taking their children out of school during term time. This high level of absence has led the DfE to make this important change.

From 1st September 2013 the new law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any applications for leave of absence must be in exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances

warrant the granting of leave. Parents can be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

The new legislation will bring about increased attendance and improving standards in schools.

Holiday/absence requests received after 1st September will therefore be recorded as unauthorised leave (unless in exceptional circumstances). Parents are still requested to complete an absence form if they intend to take their children out of school during term time.

At Eaton Primary School we are obliged to follow this law and will be held to account by OFSTED if we do not reduce the number of children taking term time holiday and, also, if we do not employ the fining measures to tackle this issue.

From September 2014, we will follow the guidelines with reference to fixed penalties for all unauthorised absences including family holidays. (5 Consecutive days or more).

Admission Forms

When a child joins the school, parents/guardians complete an Admission Form. The information from this is recorded on the school database. Information regarding parental responsibility is taken from this form or via communication from the guardian.

Admission Forms are retained in the School Pupil File until the child leaves Primary School, when the file is transferred on to the next stage of schooling.

Recording School Attendance and Absence

Daily registers are stored electronically and are always available for inspection. All data that is recorded into the School Management System is backed up daily.

The registers are called at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions and then sent to the office. Registers need to be marked with a strict colour coding.

Black ink is used for attendances

Circles in red ink are used for absences with the code in red or black

When using the manual registers, if reason for absence is unknown, teachers are asked to make a red circle in the register at the time of registration and then the absence can be coded when the circumstances are known. Legislation states that the person who takes the register must indicate whether a child is present or not. There must be no gaps. If reason for an absence is unknown this is referred to the school office for follow up.

Register Codes

There are laid down guidelines for completion of registers

- / \ present am pm (black)
- O absent – red as discussed above. A circle can be used in the first instance for all absences. However if the absence is unauthorised the code is O. Remaining a red circle in the manual register. And O on SIMS.

Within the absent symbol O we should use:

- H Holiday (red) – agreed
- F Extended agreed holiday – agreed
- G Family Holiday – Not Authorised
- M Medical/dental appointment/ (red)
- I Illness
- L late – Before registers close
(i.e. not holiday or medical)
- V if absent from school on an educational visit (red)
- E exclusion (red)
- O empty red O - unauthorised absence
- N Absence reason not known at this time
- B Educated at any other educational establishment
- P Sporting Activity
- C Authorised circumstance (e.g. family matters, funeral etc)
- U Late after registers have closed with no authorised reason
- Z When a child's name has been removed from the school roll for reasons other than leaving and moving to another school

If staff are concerned that a child is absent and do not have a reason, this is referred to office initially for a follow up call to the child's home

Date: June 2023

Attendance Policy is reviewed annually.