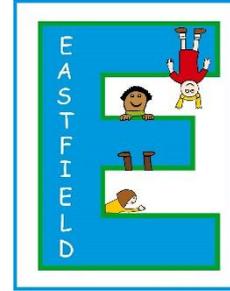


Eastfield Primary School
Attendance Policy
Updated September 2021



Eastfield Primary School is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open.

We are lucky that in the UK children currently have access to free education. The benefits of a good education include:

- Poverty reduction. Many children living in extreme poverty do not have access to basic education, and the lack of education is considered a root cause of poverty. An educated person also has a better chance of getting a higher paying job
- Promotes equality. Education is one of the greatest equalizers. It helps to ensure that there are equal opportunities for everyone regardless of race, gender, or social class.

Our Attendance target for individual pupils for 2021/2022 is 97%

[Why regular attendance is so important](#)

Learning: - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (March 2015):

- ✓ Protecting children from maltreatment.
- ✓ Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- ✓ Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- ✓ Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances.

Failing to attend school on a regular basis is a safeguarding concern under the category of neglect and may be reported to Children's services for further investigation.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- ✓ report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality band is and how this relates to their attainments
- ✓ Celebrate excellent attendance through reward assemblies, certificates, competitions and events.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from the parent / carer, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given by the school. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- ✓ parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- ✓ absences which have never been properly explained;
- ✓ Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- ✓ day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed;

All children can at times be unhappy about attending school. Any problems are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. Please contact your child's class teacher or our Family Liaison and Safeguarding Officer, Miss Rownes, as soon as possible to avoid issues escalating. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending as this gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% (from September 2015) or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. PA pupils are monitored carefully with the support of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Local Authority. Eastfield School's EWO is Alison Durnall (01902 550621).

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must contact us no later than 10am on the first day of absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- ✓ telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- ✓ invite you in to discuss the situation if necessary;
- ✓ Refer the matter to the Local Authority if attendance reaches a level of concern for us.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. It is your responsibility to ensure your child attends school on time every day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage absence.

How we manage Lateness

The school day starts at 8.45am and the gates close at 8.55am promptly. Pupils arriving at school after 8:55am must be accompanied by an adult to the front office (on Colliery Road). The parent / guardian must give a reason for the lateness. If a child is late then this is recorded on the register as an O initially and then an L – we add a note to the register to record the number of minutes late. The registers are closed at 9.05am. It should be noted that for children who are persistently late, the school may decide to move that child's close of register forward to 9am which means that if they arrive after this time their mark will be recorded as Unauthorised Late (U) – this affects their overall attendance figure. If your child is persistently late you may be asked to meet with the school's Family Liaison and Safeguarding Officer, Miss Rownes and/or the Education Welfare Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

Leave of absence shall not be granted unless –

- (a) An application has been made in advance to the Head Teacher by a parent/s with whom the pupil normally resides: and
- (b) The Head Teacher in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Eastfield School will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances. Leave Of Absence (LOA) requests should be made in writing to the Head Teacher as early as possible. A LOA form can be requested from the main school office.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parents/carers proceed with the leave of absence then it will be recorded as unauthorised and will be referred to our Education Welfare Officer. Following the referral to the EWO, Penalty Notices may be issued by the Local Authority and fines will be implemented. This is currently £60 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; and £120 if paid between 21 & 28 days of receipt of the notice

The people with responsibility for attendance matters in this school are:

Sarah Hay – Head Teacher

Vicky Rownes – Family Liaison and Safeguarding Officer

Alison Durnall – Education Welfare Officer

Summary

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils, as this is the best way to guarantee a high level of attendance. Through good attendance we can ensure every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Governing Body.

Date: September 2021

Review: July 2022

Attendance Ladder

How close is your child to 100%?

0 Days off school	100%	perfection!
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent!
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight Concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned

Appendix 1

Category Band	Attendance/ Punctuality	Action
Gold Band	100%	<u>Excellent attendance/punctuality</u> which will be celebrated
Green Band	97% to 99%	<u>Good Attendance/punctuality</u> which will be celebrated
Yellow Band 'beginning to cause a concern'	93% to 96.9%	<u>Beginning to cause concern</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents will receive a letter highlighting their child's low attendance/punctuality and asking for improvement to bring their child's attendance/punctuality to above 96% Parents may be called in for a meeting to discuss their child's low attendance/punctuality and to offer support where needed

<p>Orange Band 'serious concerns over attendance'</p>	<p>90% to 92.9%</p>	<p><u>Serious Concerns over attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will be called in for a meeting to discuss their child's low attendance/punctuality to identify reasons and discuss the effect of the absence on their child's progress and go through the support that is available • A parental/school agreement (attendance contract) will be drawn up to improve the attendance/punctuality
<p>Red Band- 'pupil identified as persistently absent and in high risk group'</p>	<p>Below 90%</p>	<p><u>Pupil identified as persistently absent and is in a high risk group</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child is classed as 'persistently absent'. A meeting will be held to discuss in-house support. The expectation is that an early help assessment will also be completed. This assessment will detail what support is needed from other professional services in order to improve attendance/punctuality. <p><u>A FIXED PENALTY MAY BE ISSUED</u></p>