



Eton Porny C of E First School

Policy Document

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Category: Non-Statutory	Approved by Headteacher: <i>E.Stanford-Smith July 2023</i>
Reviewed by: Emma Stanford-Smith, July 2023	
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We are all created unique and special.

He made us all perfect having our own uniqueness.

1 Peter 4:10-11 'God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts.

Use them well to serve one another'.

Eton Porny is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, have a high level of wellbeing and the option to make wider life choices, a high level of school attendance is essential. As a school we have zero tolerance of unauthorised absence.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that children and young people attend school rests with their parents/carers. As a school, we are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by: promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence; ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; 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. We have high expectations for attendance and punctuality and we communicate this message regularly.

We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong and trusting home-school relationships whenever there is concern about attendance. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and work in partnership with parents and pupils to remove any barriers and resolve problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Each year the school examines its attendance figures and sets the attendance target which is approved by the Local Governing Body. The target for 2023/2024 is 96%. We regularly review our systems for improving attendance to ensure that we are working towards meeting our target.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [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.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher is responsible for

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reports it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is responsible for

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Bergin and can be contacted via the school office

The attendance officer is responsible for

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The designated attendance officer is Mrs Hilton and can be contacted via the school office

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

School office staff

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

Parents/carers are expected to

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:50 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Pupils are expected to

Attend school every day on time

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8:50am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50 and will be kept open until 9:10. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm

Unplanned absence

First day: The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:50am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office and speaking to a member of staff or leaving a voicemail. If no explanation is received by 9.30am school staff will contact the parent. If the parent is not available, the school will cascade down the list of emergency contacts given until contact is made with an appropriate adult. In the unlikely event that the school is unable to make contact with an appropriate adult, the police and social care may be notified.

Subsequent Absence: Parents/ carers need to notify the school office on each subsequent day of absence. First Day Calling is repeated on each subsequent day if no acceptable explanation has been received. Social Care will be notified if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil who has a child protection plan in place.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical

evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Lateness and punctuality

Any child arriving after 8:50am enters school via the main office and the parent/carer signs them in late stating the reason. Pupils arriving between 8:50am and 9:10am will be marked as late (L) before registers close. If they arrive after the register closes at 9:10am they are recorded as (U) late after the registers close.

Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

In addition the school has a Home School Link Worker who will work with families should the school have any concerns with absence or punctuality. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parent/s. The attendance officer will liaise with the Attendance Lead, EWO and Home School Link Worker to ensure necessary action is taken when incidents of poor attendance and/or punctuality are identified.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring. Class teachers will bring this to the attention of parents/carers, if there is no improvement the school's Home School Link Worker (HSLW) will make contact to discuss ways forward. If there are still concerns parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern and will be invited to school to discuss any barriers and resolve problems. If a suitable resolution is not found and attendance or punctuality is not improving the school will work in partnership with the EWO and if necessary make a referral to Early Help.

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Monitoring attendance

The School will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

Links with other policies

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day