Eton Porny C of E First School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Category: Statutory	**Approved by Headteacher:** *E.Stanford-Smith July 2026*
Reviewed by: Marie Bergin, July 2026	
Review Schedule: Annually	**Overviewed by LGB:** *Anita Spires, Maggie Waller July 2026*
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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 2026/27 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 is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance and School attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

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
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality to parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority

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
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance

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.

The Home School Link Worker (HSLW)

The HSLW will make welfare checks to offer support to both parents and children. The HSLW will be advised when there is a pattern of poor attendance and will be the next point of contact after the class teacher.

Parents/carers are expected to

- Make sure their child attends every 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
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Mrs. Bergin via the school office

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 6 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' as set out in 2024 school attendance regulations. 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
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- 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 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

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

- The school will work with the Borough, medical staff and external agencies to support the child's return to school

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

- The school will work with the Borough, medical staff and external agencies to support the child's return to school
- Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.
- The school will use emotional related school avoidance (ERSA) strategies to support the child

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

- The school will work with parents and any external agencies to support the child's return to school

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
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and full year data to identify patterns and trends
- 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.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at

	arranged by the local authority	which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational

		purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays