

ELLENBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR PARENTS

Ellenbrook Primary School Attendance Policy

Updated by the Full Governing Body in March 2014

Updated and reviewed in Summer 17

Review date- Summer 19



Mission Statement

Ellenbrook Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a minimum of 95% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. The school will at all times endeavour to support parents/carers in overcoming any barriers to achieving regular school attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Children, Schools & Families

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1 Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- (a) To his age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) To any special needs he may have
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within the Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Each year the school will set an attendance target and will monitor attendance figures at the end of each **half term** to track progress, monitor the effectiveness of interventions and review systems

This attendance policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets and support all pupils to overcome barriers to regular school attendance.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Promoting attendance

Pupil voice – consultation with the school council

Acknowledging achievement 100% attendance badges and certificates.

Class achievement rewards in assembly

PSHE

Punctuality

Punctuality

School starts at 9:00am prompt.

EYFS and KS1 children should be lined up and ready to enter school when the doors open at 8:55.

KS2 doors will open to children at 8:45

All doors will close at 9:00am. Any child arriving at school after this time must enter school through the main entrance, the secretary will help to sign the child in. They will then receive a 'late' mark- unless there are mitigating circumstances e.g. unusual traffic problems.

Children still absent after 9:30 will be coded as having 'unauthorised absence' – unless parents contact school, (telephone call, email, letter etc.) with an explanation.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.15 for EYFS and KS1 and 1:00pm for KS2

First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school, for whatever reason, it is the responsibility of the parent /carer to inform the school by 9:00am on the first day of absence by telephoning 0161 799 6347. On your child's return to school, he/she should bring a note to confirm the reason for the absence.

If a parent/carers does not contact school with a reason, the school will attempt to contact the parent/carers by every means possible. This will continue for one school day or until the parent/carers contacts school and provides a reason for their child's absence. If contact cannot be made after 24 hours, then the DCPO will either make a home visit or request a welfare check from Children's Services. If contact still cannot be made then the child will be recorded as 'Missing from Education'; Children's Services and the L.A will be informed. If contact is made, but the school is not satisfied with the reason provided, or if no reason is given, it will be recorded in the register as an unauthorised absence. Parents cannot authorise a child's absence from school, it is the schools decision to authorise/unauthorise absences.

Managing Absence

It is the responsibility of the parent/carers to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

This enables the school to work in partnership with the parent/carers by identifying what the issues are and devising a joint action plan to implement interventions that can improve the situation.

Through reviewing the plan on a regular basis and through listening to the views of all parties it is anticipated that there would be improvements and good working relationships established based on honesty and trust.

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If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Health Adviser/School Nurse etc, if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's named EWO.

All absences will be tracked and monitored by the school.

Escalation of intervention – actions that will be taken by the school and at what point other agencies will be involved.

- A letter will be sent home requesting the parents/carers of that child to contact the school as a matter of urgency.
- Try to gain the views of the child as to the reasons for absences when it is a cause of concern
- If the reason for absence is school based Mrs Parkins will work with the young person to resolve the issue. Working within the guidelines of other policies E.G anti-bullying policy.
- If no response is received from the parents/carers and absence remains a point of concern, the parents/carers will be invited into school by the Headteacher
- The purpose of the meeting will be to establish the reasons for absence and support mechanisms agreed to overcome the barriers preventing regular school attendance
- In some cases a visit may be made to the family home by a member of school staff.

The Governors will:

- Monitor attendance termly and review all strategies being used.

Head Teacher will:

- Write and update the school policy for attendance
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Service to provide the best possible service for the school.
- Be available to support, guide and advise staff in relation to attendance matters
- Organise rewards in assemblies
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Office Staff will

- Present information to the Governors as and when required
- Monitor overall attendance and punctuality
- Monitor Persistent Absence (PA) data

SENDCO will:

- Organise and lead Attendance Panels
- Co-ordinate support strategies for pupils returning to school after periods of absence
- Implement intervention strategies for missed work
- Analyse data on pupils with persistent absence each half term
- Compare attendance figures to previous years

All teaching staff will:

- Register their forms in the morning
- Collect absence notes and discuss issues affecting attendance
- Monitor pupils attendance and discuss reasons for absence with pupils
- Alert office staff about occasions of unauthorised absence and any concerns re: attendance/registers
- Promote good attendance by providing meaningful and challenging learning experiences
- Keep accurate attendance records for each teaching group
- Provide appropriate work to support re-integration following a period of absence

If there is no improvement in levels of attendance the SENDCO will inform the Education Welfare Officer through completing the referral from on the secure upload which will indicate the perceived needs of the child and the actions taken by school to improve the situation.

Persistent Absence

Pupils are categorised as being a 'Persistent Absence' pupil if they accumulate 10% (*new figure*) or more absences

For children whose attendance falls into the 'persistent absence' category, parents/carers will be contacted by Sara Baird SENDCO and/or they will be invited to school for a meeting with her and Mrs Parkins. During this meeting

- An action plan will be compiled with input from the parent/carer, school and pupil.
- Targets will be agreed and reviewed until that child is no longer in the persistent absence category.
- There would be a focus on links between attendance and attainment.
- A parenting contract will be offered if it is deemed appropriate
- If appropriate the targets will include fast track to prosecution which will involve the Education Welfare officer

If the parent fails to attend the meeting or there is no significant improvement in attendance the issues will be brought to the attention Education Welfare Officer by the completion of the referral form as outlined above.

Holidays in term time

Ellenbrook Primary School, in line with the Local Authority, will normally not authorise holidays taken in term time because of the detrimental effect this absence would have upon the child's learning. (See additional information for parents).

Absence for Modelling, The Arts and Sports etc.

1. Absence will not be authorised if the child's attendance, attainment and progress are not as 'expected'. (Parents will already have been notified of any problems N.B Attendance below 90% is 'persistent absence')
2. Each request will be treated on an individual basis and parents will meet Mrs Parkins to discuss their request. As a rule, authorisation is more likely when exceptional talent is being supported by expert 'offsite' tuition.
3. Modelling and advertising assignments will not normally be agreed for more than 3 days per school year
4. In any case, no more than 10 days will be authorised, unless the child has been awarded an *Entertainment (Performance) Licence* from the *Child Employment Officer for Salford*
5. Should parents exceed the agreed number of days then our Unauthorised Absence policy will apply and parents may be fined by the local authority.

Legal Sanctions

Ellenbrook Primary School will consider applying for penalty notice warnings in the following circumstances:

- Unauthorised absence of ten sessions or more (There are two sessions in a day)
- Unauthorised holidays in term time
- Persistent late arrival (after the register has closed and an unauthorised absence is created).

The Local Authority can instigate prosecution under the Education Act 1996 section 441 or 441(a) when:-

- Parent/Carers persistently fail to respond to any correspondence in relation to their child's absence
- Evidence indicates that support has been offered but parents/carers have failed to engage
- Targets have been agreed with the parent/carers through the Fast track procedure but improvements have not been made
- There is sufficient evidence that parent/carers have failed in their responsibility to ensure that their child receives appropriate full time education.

Disposal for prosecutions for non school attendance can range from a fine to a custodial sentence.

Reintegration to school

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

- Additional support to enable young person to catch up on work
- Buddy system
- Peer mentoring
- Review of progress
- Listen to the young person



HOLIDAYS IN TERM-TIME

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.

WARNING: If you take your child on holiday in term time without the prior approval of the school, you may be liable for a minimum of £60 Penalty Notice per parent per child.

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child’s education by, whenever possible, taking your holidays during school holidays.

If your child’s attendance falls below 95%, a meeting may be arranged with the school nurse and the education welfare officer in order to discuss your child’s health etc.

THE FACTS	THE LAW
<p>We recognise that it is often expensive to take a holiday during school breaks and that is why some parents may ask for term-time leave for their child. However, it is important that parents carefully consider the implications of taking their child out of school during term time.</p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the course work they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p>If the school refuses a request for term-time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and you may receive a fine per parent for each child.</p>	<p>The law does not say that parents have an automatic right to take their child out of school during term-time.</p> <p>However, in exceptional circumstances school may authorise, in advance, requests for periods of leave of no more than ten days in total in any year.</p> <p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have to take the child off roll unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness. In these circumstances it is up to the parent to inform the school as once removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.</p>

<p>Other absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Genuine illness ▪ Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible) ▪ Days of religious observance ▪ Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement ▪ Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces ▪ External examinations ▪ When Traveller children go on the road with their parents 	<p>Other absence from school will not be authorised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For any type of shopping ▪ Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents ▪ Minding the house ▪ Birthdays ▪ Resting after a late night ▪ Relatives visiting or visiting relatives ▪ Cheap holidays
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ELLENBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR PARENTS



SIGNED Head Teacher Date

REFUSAL LETTER

ADDRESS

DATE

Pupil Name:

Dear

I have received your request to authorise a Leave of Absence for on
.....

Due to new legislation that has been brought in by the Department for Education, no holidays will be authorised during school term from the 1 September 2013.

The school year is an important time for children in all years both for academic and social reasons.

If your child does not have regular attendance in school you could be prosecuted under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Taking your child on a term time holiday that is not authorised may result in a Penalty Notice Fine which if not paid will lead to prosecution for the offence committed. School has the right to challenge parents/carers to request evidence if they feel no acceptable reason for absence has been provided.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further clarification on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Parkins

HEAD TEACHER



Salford City Council

Can I get help if my child is not attending regularly?
Yes, Salford Children's Services and your child's school will give you advice and support if you need to help secure an improvement in your child's attendance.

It is very important that you speak with the school or contact your Locality Team at the earliest opportunity if you have any worries about securing your child's attendance.

Useful Contacts
Erin Rowan – Court Officer
Mossfield Children's Centre, Mossfield Road,
Swinton, Manchester, M27 6EH
Tel: 0161 778 0493

North Locality Team - 0161 778 0495
South Locality Team - 0161 686 5260
Central Locality Team - 0161 778 0601
West Locality Team - 0161 686 7235

**EVERY DAY COUNTS
DO NOT LET YOUR
CHILD MISS OUT**

REMEMBER
- EACH PARENT WILL BE FINED FOR EACH CHILD
- A PENALTY NOTICE WILL BE ISSUED REGARDLESS OF PREVIOUS ATTENDANCE
- A PENALTY NOTICE CAN BE ISSUED WITHOUT WARNING

How do I pay?
Details of payment arrangements will be included on the Penalty Notice. You need to be aware that payment in part or by instalment is not an option with Penalty Notices.

What happens if I do not pay?
You have up to 28 days from receipt to pay the Penalty Notice in full, after which Salford Children's Services is required under the Act to commence proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of poor attendance by your child.
If proven, this can attract a range of fines up to £1,000.

Can I be prosecuted if I pay the Penalty Notice but my child is still missing school?
Not for the period included in the Penalty Notice, the payment discharges your liability in this respect. However, it may be the case that a prosecution might be considered for further periods of poor attendance not covered by the Notice, depending on the circumstances.

If this is an issue, it is vital that you work closely with your child's school and support agencies such as the Locality Team within your area.

**PENALTY
NOTICES FOR
HOLIDAYS/LEAVE OF
ABSENCE FROM
SCHOOL**

**INFORMATION AND
ADVICE TO PARENTS
AND CARERS**

**MAD ABOUT SCHOOL
IN SALFORD**



PENALTY NOTICES FOR HOLIDAYS/LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

What are my rights?

From 1st September 2013 new guidance issued by the Department for Education will apply to all absences during term time. An absence during term time, including family holidays, is not a right.

Any absence from school disrupts a child's learning. In addition, children returning from a term-time absence generally require additional time from teachers to catch up on the teaching they have missed. This can have an impact on the education of other pupils in their class.

Therefore, the Department for Education only allows head teachers discretion to authorise an absence if they believe there are **exceptional circumstances**.

What are exceptional circumstances?

These have not been specifically defined by the Department for Education, it is therefore the head teachers discretion that will determine this.

Only a head teacher can make that decision based on the information provided to them by you, not the Local Authority or a parent.

What circumstances are NOT exceptional?

These include:

- the availability of cheap holidays
- an absence or holiday paid for, or booked, by someone else
- an overlap with beginning/end of term
- a mix up in term dates

(list is not exhaustive)

How do I request an absence?

You can put your request in writing to the school either by letter or on the schools absence request form. You must send your request into school as soon as possible.

The head teacher will then make the decision whether the absence is considered to be exceptional. If it is considered not to be an exceptional circumstance then the request will be unauthorised. This decision will be relayed to you by the school.

If the absence has been authorised because of exceptional circumstances, you must ensure you return on the date you have specified. This absence is then recorded as an authorised absence and coded accordingly.

What if my request is not authorised?

If you feel you have exceptional circumstances, have you made the school fully aware of these? If an absence has been unauthorised by the head teacher, the Local Authority cannot override their decision. Therefore, if you have any queries in relation to why your absence was unauthorised you must refer these to the head teacher, not the issuing Authority.

What are the costs?

Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60.00 and £120.00 if paid after this but within 28 days. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly. Both Penalty Notices must be paid.

For example, in a family where there are two parents who fail to ensure the regular attendance of their two children, the fine would be £240 for each parent, reduced to £120 for each parent if paid within 21 days.

Is a Warning Given?

Yes, a warning letter will be issued from the Local Authority prior to your holiday **IF** you request a holiday/leave of absence in advance. If you choose to take the holiday regardless of the schools decision then you will be in receipt of a Penalty Notice on your return.

However, where you have taken a holiday during term time without requesting permission you will not receive a warning letter from the Local Authority. Instead you will receive Penalty Notice, the Local Authority is authorised to do this.

There is no limit to the number of times a formal warning of possible Penalty Notice issue may be made in any particular case.

What if the holiday is taken?

The school may request the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice. This is a fine of £60 per parent for each child. If the fine is unpaid, court action may follow.

Is there an Appeal Process?

There is no statutory right of appeal once a notice has been issued, but on receipt of a Penalty Notice you can make representation should you wish i.e. if you believe that the Penalty Notice has been issued to the wrong person.

All correspondence should be addressed to either Tim Littlemore or Steve Canning (Service Managers) Mossfield Children's Centre, Mossfield Road, Swinton M27 6EH.