

Attendance Policy



Approved by the governing body on:-	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Review Date	Autumn 2024

Attendance Policy

	<p>Statement of Intent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eagle School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The staff and governors believe that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the school will work with parents to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.• The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually.
	<p>Aims</p> <p>We recognise that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.• No pupil should be deprived of the opportunity to access this education.• In the first instance, it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.• Some parents may need the support of the school in order to meet their attendance obligations.• Situations beyond the control of the pupils and parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of the parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.• Most children want to attend school to learn, socialise and prepare themselves for their future role in society.
	<p>Parents' Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.• Parents should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should contact the school as soon as possible, on the first morning of absence.• Parents may not authorise their child's absence - only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents (should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason for absence the school will record it as unauthorised.)• Parents should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (8.55 am). If a child arrives after 9.00am his/her parent should report directly to the school office.• Parents should not book family holidays during term-time. If bookings have been made despite this directive, parents should complete the absence forms in advance of the absence for the Head to process (leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.)• Attend Parents' Consultation Meetings to discuss progress and talk to staff if there are any problems or changes of family circumstances which may affect the child.• Contact the school if problems arise which may keep their child away from school, so the school can help.
	<p>Pupils' Responsibilities</p> <p><i>We expect the following from all our pupils:-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That they know to attend school regularly.• That they help in order to arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day.• That they tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them attending school.

School Responsibilities

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- Registers will be called twice daily (at 8.55 and at 1.00). Registers will close at 9.00 and at 1.05. Any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as 'late' for that session.
- Teachers will complete electronic registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the staff handbook. The headteacher will inspect registers each Monday in order to ensure that these are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage.
- Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality they should alert the headteacher.
- Should a child be absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. Should no explanation be received from the child's parent, the registers are monitored by the office every morning and the parent/carer will be contacted. Should this prove impossible the matter will be referred to the headteacher.
- All absence notes from parents will be saved in the electronic notes.
- The headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and report it to parents termly. If attendance falls below 90%, the headteacher will communicate with parents.
- The headteacher will use this data during meetings with the school's Education Welfare Officer.
- The headteacher will review attendance targets with the (Education Advisor) EA.
- The school will employ a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
 - the headteacher and class teachers will communicate regularly with parents on attendance matters;
 - personal engagement and welcome will be commonplace to ensure a welcoming environment is established with a sense of belonging;
 - clear attendance information will be entered in the school brochure;
 - local authority parents leaflets will be sent to all new parents;
 - request doctor notes for pupils with attendance rates falling below 90%.

School Organisation

In order for the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to pupils the importance and value of education. In addition, specific responsibilities are allocated to individual members of staff as follows:

Head Teacher

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the policy.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors, parents and pupils.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence.
- To liaise with the Educational Welfare Officer

Class Teacher

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.
- To inform the head teacher of any concerns regarding absence.

Office Staff

- Produce two-termly attendance reports.
- Telephone parents at the close of registers when notification for absence has not been received.
- Maintain a late book.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

	<p>All other absence must be regarded as unauthorised.</p> <p><i>The following may be reasons for authorising absences:-</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness • Family bereavements • Medical and dental appointments • Days of religious observances • Fixed term exclusions • Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated
	<p><u>Holidays in Term Time</u></p> <p>Parents are required to complete a 'Leave of Absence' form for any absence which is due to a holiday during term time. Each application will be considered individually by the Headteacher based on the absence guidance provided and in rare circumstances, this may be approved. Parents have the right to appeal to the Governors regarding the decision made and complaints should be made in writing and addressed to the Chair of Governors.</p> <p>Further details can be found following the links in the Appendix or on our Attendance Leaflet on the school website.</p>
	<p><u>Approved Educational Activity</u></p> <p>There are some occasions when children are absent from school but taking part in an approved educational activity. The pupils will be marked as 'off site' for fire safety reasons but this will not be recorded as an absence. The following activities fall within this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field trips and educational visits • Sporting activities
	<p><u>Lateness</u></p> <p>The school encourages pupils to arrive on time to ensure a prompt start to lessons. Pupils should arrive at school between 8.45 and 8.55am. At 9.00am doors and registers will be closed and any pupil arriving after this time will be considered late and asked to enter through the front door. When a pupil arrives after the register has closed they will be marked with an unauthorised absence for that session with a letter 'L' to show they are on site. In the event of bad weather, registers will remain open for a longer period.</p>
	<p><u>Responding to Non-Attendance and Poor Attendance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a pupil fails to attend school and no notification as to the reason for the absence is received, the school will telephone the parents once the registers are closed. • The parents of any child whose attendance falls below 90% in any two term period will be notified of the school's concern. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stage 1 - Letter outlining attendance rates and offering a meeting ○ Stage 2 - Letter outlining attendance rates and requesting a meeting ○ Stage 3 - Letter outlining Section 444 of 1996 Education Act and intent to involve EWO. ○ Stage 4 - Letter to inform EWO has been engaged. • The Educational Welfare Officer, will set attendance targets for the next period and a plan of support agreed to help the parents and pupil improve attendance. • Failure to improve attendance after this point may lead to prosecution under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act for failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance.

	<p><u>Education Welfare Support</u></p> <p>The service can be bought in for individual casework/strategic support. The EWS will specify the support best suited to its needs. The frequency, length and timing of sessions can be flexible at the start and end of the day, and will be in agreed with the allocated Education Welfare Officer (EWO).</p>
	<p><u>Removal from the school roll</u></p> <p>There are strict guidelines on the circumstances under which a pupil may be removed from the school roll. These are detailed in Circulars 1099 and 111/99 and the Schools Administration Handbook (section A2). Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than those detailed below is illegal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school • Where a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parent(s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school. • Where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school. • Where the pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Head Teacher of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the Education Welfare Service to obtain information on the cause of the absence. • Where the Head Teacher has been notified that the pupil has died. • Where a pupil in the nursery class has not transferred to a reception class at the school. • Except in the case of a boarder, the pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school. • If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time. • Where a pupil will cease to be of compulsory schools age before the school next meets and has been notified an intention to discontinue in attendance. • Where the pupil has been permanently excluded and this decision has been confirmed by the Pupil Discipline Committee
	<p><u>Ensuring Pupil Information is up to date</u></p> <p>Schools should ensure, as far as possible, that the information they hold on pupils and parents is accurate and up to date. This will help to ensure that contact with families is productive and that referrals to other agencies can be actioned effectively. Principle 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998 states 'Personal Data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date'.</p>
	<p><u>Pupils who are missing</u></p> <p>Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquiries have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the Common Transfer File should be completed and uploaded to the DfES National Missing Pupils Database.</p>

Reference points for Pupils' Leave of Absence for Holidays:

- 2006 Pupil Registration regulations which are available at www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation, including the explanatory note attached to the back of the regulations;
- Explanatory Memorandum available at www.opsi.gov.uk and accompanies the regulations and explanatory note;
- Penalty Notices Code of Conduct – available from the Inclusion and Attendance Team contact at fnp@lincolnshire.gov.uk
- School attendance departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities – DFE, October 2014 available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

Contact Points

Education Welfare Services Team (please contact school for the telephone numbers)

Action Points

- School attendance policies should emphasise that absence from school, for any reason, can have a negative impact on a child's educational progress and that holidays in term-time should be avoided
- Requests from parents to take their child of compulsory school age out of school during term time can only be granted by the school in exceptional circumstances
- Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted

The Use of Penalty Warnings and Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Holidays in Term Time

Penalty Warnings and Penalty Notices are used for unauthorised absences including those for holidays without permission. These will be issued according to the Department for Education guidance.

Resolving Disagreements

Where there is a lack of agreement between the school and the LA as to the appropriateness of issuing a penalty warning letter or a penalty notice, the matter will be referred to the County Legal Proceedings Panel whose decision shall be final.

Eagle School Attendance Leaflet Information

The collage consists of several documents from Eagle C.P. School:

- Summary of School Attendance Policy:** States that children should attend school every day. It lists three reasons for contacting the school office: if a child is not well enough to attend, if a parent is unable to contact the school, or if there is a duty of care for the child's safety.
- Attendance Leaflet:** Explains that regular attendance is a parent's legal responsibility. It notes that if a child's attendance falls below 90%, the school will issue a Penalty Notice and fine. It also mentions that if attendance falls below 85% or less, it is classified as 'persistent absence'.
- What the law says ...:** States that ensuring a child's regular attendance is a parent's legal responsibility. It notes that good reasons for absence are an offence and may result in referral to the Education Welfare Service.
- What the government says ...:** Cites new government guidelines: 95% attendance is good, 90% is good, and 85% or less is 'persistent absence'. It also states that the government expects children to attend school for a minimum of 95% of the year.
- Illness Guidance ...:** Advises that being ill may prevent a child from coming to school, but if they can get out of bed and play or enjoy TV, they should be in school. It notes that coughs and sneezes are not an excuse to miss school and that being tired is not an illness. It also states that if a child's attendance falls below 90% due to illness, a doctor's certificate is required to verify the absence.
- Leave of Absence ...:** States that the Department for Education has recently made changes regarding Leave of Absence during term time, effective from 1st September 2013. It notes that Leave of Absence is not permitted during term-time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.
- 'Unauthorised Absence' ...:** Defines unauthorised absence as when a child is absent without the school's permission. It notes that significant unauthorised absence percentages can result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.