

# Eastcote Primary Academy



**Eastcote**  
Primary Academy

## Attendance Policy

September 2023

## **Statement of Intent**

We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

We expect all school personnel to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school. School personnel have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances, it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

We are aware that leave of absence can only be granted to a pupil only in exceptional circumstances and in authorising a holiday in term time we will take-into-account the child's attendance record, the child's age, the reason for the trip, the time in the academic year and the employment difficulties that parents face by taking holidays in school holiday time.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

### **Good attendance is vital because:**

- It improves children's mental health and wellbeing
- Children learn more and enjoy their learning
- It helps children to make and keep friends
- Children are not as at risk of underachievement
- Children do not miss out on enrichment opportunities that are vital to their development
- Children thrive on routines

## **Role of the Principal**

The Principal will:

- Ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy
- Monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for free school meals, special educational needs and persistent absentees
- Monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning
- Target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders
- Have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence
- Remind parents of their commitment to this policy
- Promote the importance of attendance
- Share good attendance during assemblies, newsletters
- Organise training if required for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance
- Strengthen links with external agencies who engage with and support families
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy

## **Role of the School Admin Staff**

The office personnel are responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Principal
- Monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis
- Keeping the Principal informed of attendance figures and trends
- Contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance
- Organising meetings between the SLT and parents to discuss their child's poor attendance
- Forward to the Principal any applications for a term time holiday
- Compiling attendance data reports for the Principal, the Governing Body and the EWO
- Meet half-termly with the Bexley EWO to conduct monitoring of school attendance
- Meet fortnightly with the Trust Attendance office to monitor the school attendance
- Ensuring registers are kept up to date

## **Role of the First Day Contact Supervisor**

The First Day Contact Supervisor is responsible for:

- Contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 9.00am
- Continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made
- Contacting the key worker if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence
- If no contact made, alert the Bexley EWO to make a home visit to assess situation
- Deploying two members of staff to visit vulnerable children on their first day of absence
- Deploying two members of staff to collect a vulnerable child from home if a parent is unable to bring their child to school
- Informing the SLT of trends in absence.

## **Role of School Personnel**

School personnel will:

- Comply with and implement this policy
- Set an example of punctuality and good attendance
- Ensure that registers are taken by 9:00 and are accurate and up to date
- Be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns
- Inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy
- Emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents
- Discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations

## **Role of Parents**

Parents are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy
- Ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance
- Informing the school on the first day of absence before 8:55am;
- Informing the school of any changes to their contact details
- Collecting their children on time
- Not taking holidays in term time

## **Dealing with Trends in Attendance**

When poor attendance is identified the following actions could be taken:

- Parents are invited to attend an informal meeting with the Principal
- Support will be given if there are underlying reasons for the absence
- First Letter of Concern
- Letter of Concern and alert the Bexley EWO who will also monitor attendance
- The Bexley EWO will take the appropriate action

## **Dealing with Lateness**

The office personnel monitor lateness and will:

- Ensure that children arriving after 8.55 are recorded as late in the register
- inform the SLT of patterns of lateness;
- inform parents of the school's concerns and arrange a meeting so that the problem can be addressed

## **Absence**

### **Leavers and Children Missing in Education**

The school has a responsibility to safeguard pupils from harm. This includes knowing and taking reasonable

steps to check the destinations of leavers. If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to Secondary School, parents are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving

When pupils leave and parents have not given us the above information, and we cannot contact the parent, then the child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations to try to track and locate the child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

**Holidays during term time** – parents are encouraged to take a family holiday not in term time. Leave of absence only allowed in exceptional circumstances. Parents are to submit a letter to the Principal explaining the reasons as to why they are requesting permission to take their child out of school.

**Religious Observance** - pupils will have absence authorised for religious observances.

**Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments** – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child's education.