



Policy on Attendance

1 Introduction

1.1 At Ernehale Infant and Junior Schools we believe in promoting excellent attendance and punctuality for all of our pupils, in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that school has to offer. We believe that regular attendance is vitally important in promoting successful learning, as well as developing good habits required for adult life. It has been proven that attainment can be closely linked to attendance and in order to achieve their full potential children should aim for the highest attendance possible. This aim is fully supported through appropriate recording and rewarding procedures being in place and a child's very good attendance is both celebrated and rewarded.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 and in conjunction with Local Authority (LA) Policy, the Governing Body are responsible for ensuring that the school attendance register is maintained and records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. Where a child is absent the register also indicates whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Arrival and Registration

All children should be ready to come into school on time at **8.55am** each day, the gates to the playground open at 8:45am. The register is taken twice a day at **9:00am** and **1.00pm**. A full day counts as 2 attendances.

Morning registration ends at 9.15am. If a child arrives after the registration period they will be marked in as late. The afternoon register is taken at 1.00pm.

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent /carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent/carer writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents /carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as acceptable and "authorised". For example, if a parent/carer takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school **and** a parent/carer.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register.
- 3.2 Parents are expected to email or telephone the school by 8.55am on the morning of the day of absence to inform the school that their child will be absent, they are asked to state a reason.
- 3.3 If there has been no contact, then the school office will 'text/ring' the parent or guardian on the morning of the first day of absence. The parent or guardian will be prompted to contact the school.
- 3.4 If there is no response from the parent on the **third** day of absence the school office will call the parent to establish the child's whereabouts. If the parent is unavailable following this the school office will write to the parent asking them to contact school immediately.
- 3.5 If the parent has still not made contact by the fourth day the schools head teacher and family support worker will be informed. Home visits will take place where possible.
- 3.6 If there continues to be no contact from the parent's referrals will be made to outside agencies such as the Children's Missing Officer or Education Welfare.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 Children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible.
- 4.2 The school understands that there may be circumstances under which a parent /carer may legitimately request leave of absence for a child. When considering applications for leave of absence - where there are **exceptional circumstances** - the Head Teacher and Governing Body will take into account the individual circumstances, age of the child, the timing of the absence and the child's attendance record. Requests for absence will not be authorised at times which are considered inappropriate, i.e. the start of a new school year or during statutory assessment periods.
- 4.3 Parents will be required to complete an 'Absence Request' letter for all pre planned absences, detailing the exceptional circumstances to be considered, the educational benefits and the measures they intend to take to ensure their child is not disadvantaged by missing essential elements of the school curriculum.
- 4.5 It is expected that medical appointments will be made outside of school hours, however emergency and specialist appointments will be given careful consideration.
- 4.6 School may request medical evidence in order to authorise absences for illness should a child's attendance record be a cause for concern. A letter will be sent to parents advising them of the requirement to provide medical evidence in order for school to authorise any future absences. If poor attendance is due to reported medical conditions with no medical evidence then absences may be unauthorised and a referral to targeted support and/or school health may be necessary.
- 4.7 Accredited exams e.g. dance, music drama and representing their school/County in sport will be authorised
Holidays during term time

If the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purpose of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) in total over a 6 week rolling period, then the school can, at the discretion of the Headteacher, request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom unauthorised absence applies.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send work and materials home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent/carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents/carers will be asked to visit the school to discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Local Authority (LA) support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.
- 6.3 The school holiday dates and end of Key stage assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence will not be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published at the beginning of the school year but may be subject to change.
- 6.4 In line with the government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that the school will follow the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct for attendance. Warning letters and penalty notice fines may be issued as follows:

Persistent Absence

Once a child has reached 3 days (6 sessions) unauthorised absence over a 6 week rolling period, the school can, at the discretion of the Headteacher, request the Local Authority to issue a warning letter. The letter will make it clear that any further absence may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child to whom persistent absence applies.

The monitoring period for warning letters will be 12 weeks where the school will make every effort to support the child and the family to improve their attendance.

If the unauthorised absence persists and then rises to 5 days (10 sessions) over a 6 week rolling period then the school can, at the discretion of the Headteacher, request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent to whom persistent absence applies. In these cases the Local Authority may also consider what services or measures may be provided to prevent or reduce further unauthorised absence including support and interventions through the Family Service.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any year will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded annually.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance of the school. The governing body also has the responsibility for this attendance policy. The school keeps attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 8.2 This policy will be reviewed by the School's Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Date: June 2017

Review June 2019