



Earl Spencer Primary School

Attendance policy

Approved by: [Name] Date: [Date]

Last reviewed on: [Date]

Next review due by: [Date]

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

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
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Miss Brear and can be contacted via 01604 751130

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- 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 (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Miss Brear and can be contacted via 01604 751130

3.5 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 on the same day.

3.6 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the FSW in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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 3 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 8.50am and will be kept open until 8.55am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45pm (EYFS) 1pm (KS1 & Year 3) & 1.30pm (KS2)

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin/office staff (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised (I) unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. All children who reach below 95% of absence may be automatically deemed unauthorised unless medical information is received

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. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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.

Absence attached to a school holiday/weekend maybe automatically deemed unauthorised unless medical information is received.

4.3 Planned absence

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.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

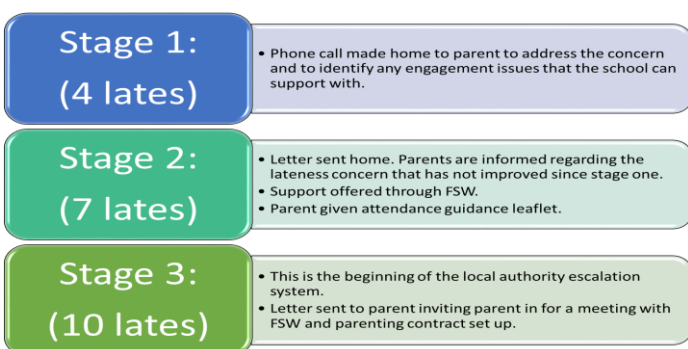
A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (O)

The attendance officer monitors pupil lateness on a fortnightly basis.

If a pupil's lateness meets the school threshold for sessions late we will follow our attendance chart. (Please see below).

Letters will be sent to parents in stages two and three. (See appendix 4)



4.5 Following up

unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit, call the police etc.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

There is no entitlement to time off in term time. It is the government's stance that:

- That no holidays in term time can be authorised.
- That no visits to the family's country of origin in term time can be authorised in term time.
- We will authorise absences allowed by law.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically. (The Parent's advice letter, when they request additional time off school, is an appendix to this policy).

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If you take your child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions) (83.33%) over a period of six weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local authority for consideration of legal action. This could include,

- A Penalty Notice payable up to £120 fine without further reference to you for a penalty notice this warning is valid for 12 months.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment."

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance. Amongst these strategies:

Weekly

- The Attendance Cup is awarded to the best Class on the basis of good attendance and time keeping. Rewards will be available to classes who achieve 96+% attendance

Termly

- Children with 100% attendance receive a prize.
- Parent hamper or voucher

Yearly

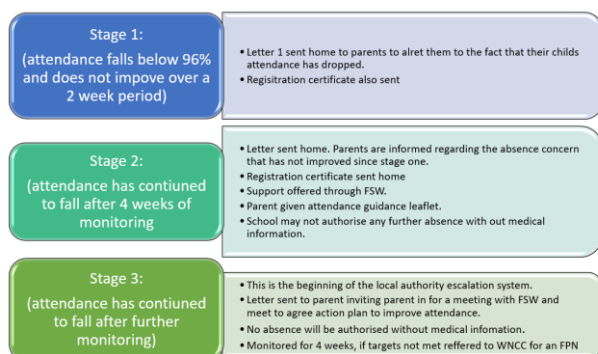
- Each child with 100% attendance for that year receives a certificate presented in the end of term Assembly.
- Excellent attendance is celebrated by the publishing of names in the 'Monday News'.
- The class with the best attendance is awarded the Attendance Cup overall.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a fortnightly basis.

If a pupil's absences meets the school threshold for % of sessions missed we will follow our attendance chart. (Please see below)

Letters will be sent to parents in stages two and three. (See appendix 3)



7.1 Monitoring attendance

- › 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.

7.2 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
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 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

7.4 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
- › 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

8. Monitoring arrangements

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

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
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Authorised absence

C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence

G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Letter- stage 1

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

We have noticed that your child has had some recent illness that has affected their attendance figure and we would like to alert you to this. We have enclosed a copy of your child's Registration Certificate for your information.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's health and would like further support, you might find it useful to be aware of Children's 0-19 service which has a resource hub for tip and advice for parents on a range of issues.

<https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/childrenshub>

We have also enclosed out Pastoral leaflet with the support on offer from our in school team all freely available to you.

Please ensure your child has the maximum attendance in future to enable this figure to rise to the desired percentage of 96% or above.

If you require any further information, or support please contact our Family Worker Mrs Russell.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Brear

Appendix 3: Letter- stage 2

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

We know that every family's circumstances are different, and want to work with you to provide the best education for your child. However we have noted that your child's attendance still appears to be of concern, despite previous correspondence alerting you to this. We have enclosed a copy of your child's Registration Certificate for your information.

Please let us know if there's anything else going on at home or at school which might be making it difficult for them to attend regularly.

We want to make sure that we can support their education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Our Attendance Support Officer, from West Northamptonshire County Council, visits school regularly to undertake checks. As your child's attendance has been reduced to 93% or below, this will be looked at and may lead to further intervention from their service.

If we continue to see a decline in attendance, we will be in contact again to arrange a meeting in school to discuss this further.

As stated in the previous letter, if you have any concerns regarding your child's health and would like further support, you might find it useful to be aware of Children's 0-19 service which has a resource hub for tip and advice for parents on a range of issues.

<https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/childrenshub>

If you would like further support or information regarding attendance, please contact our Family Worker, Mrs Russell, on 01604 751130.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Brear

Appendix 4: Letter- stage 3

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

Invitation for a meeting to discuss attendance

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s attendance at school which has now reached ...%. This has taken them further below the 96% attendance that as you will be aware is our target for every child.

We are now inviting you to a meeting which will be chaired by our Family Support Worker, Mrs Russell.

This meeting will be on Thursday 25th May 8.45am in school.

We would like to find out whether there is anything:

1. Happening at school that makes it difficult for them to attend
2. Happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
3. We can do to make it easier for them to attend school regularly.

Using this information we will then agree an improvement plan with you to aid improvements in your child's attendance to school.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Brear
Co-Headteacher

Appendix 4: Letter- Term time/Holiday absence FPN

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

Termtime/Holiday absence

I'm writing about your action in taking [name(s)] out of school for a family holiday between [date] and [date].

This as an unauthorised absence.

At Earl Spencer Primary School we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

We have the power to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice for unauthorised term-time holidays.

We are now making you aware that we will be passing your details onto West Northamptonshire County Council for consideration of an FPN.

If you're issued with a penalty notice, you must pay:

- £60, if it's paid within 21 days of receiving the notice
- £120, if it's paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If you don't pay the penalty within 28 days, the local authority could pursue legal action.

We must make you aware that under **Section 444 1/1A of the 1996 Education Act**, you as the parent are responsible for ensuring your child of statutory school age attends school regularly and on time.

Absences like these could have a detrimental effect on [name(s)] education.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Co-Headteacher

Appendix 5: Letter- Lateness

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

Poor punctuality

I'm writing to you because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

They have arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

They also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

The school day begins promptly at 8.50am and registration closes at 8.55am.

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn't miss schoolwork, and prevents disruption to the teacher and other pupils. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's health, feel this affecting their punctuality and would like further support, you might find it useful to be aware of Children's 0-19 service which has a resource hub for tip and advice for parents on a range of issues.

<https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/childrenshub>

If you would like further support, please contact our Family Worker, Mrs Russell, on 01604 751130.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Brear
Co-Headteacher

Appendix 6: Letter- Lateness stage 2

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

Poor punctuality

I'm writing to you again because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

They have arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

They also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

The school day begins promptly at 8.50am and registration closes at 8.55am.

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn't miss schoolwork, and prevents disruption to the teacher and other pupils. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time.

If you have any concerns regarding your child's health, feel this affecting their punctuality and would like further support, you might find it useful to be aware of Children's 0-19 service which has a resource hub for tip and advice for parents on a range of issues.

<https://www.nhft.nhs.uk/childrenshub>

If you would like further support, please contact our Family Worker, Mrs Russell, on 01604 751130.

As school operating in the Northamptonshire Local Authority, we follow their procedures in regard to lateness of students who are statutory school age. When a case is referred to our Local Authority's Educational Inclusion Partnership Team they will investigate the matter.

We must make you aware that under **Section 444 1/1A of the 1996 Education Act**, you as the parent are responsible for ensuring your child of statutory school age attends school regularly and on time.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Brear
Co-Headteacher

Appendix 7: Lateness letter- stage 3

(Date)

To Parent/Carer of (name):

Invitation for a meeting to discuss Lateness

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s punctuality at school.

Since we wrote to you last they have arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

They also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

The school day begins promptly at **8.50am** and registration closes at 8.55am.

We are now inviting you to a meeting which will be chaired by our Family Support Worker, Mrs Russell.

This meeting will be on **Thursday 25th May 8.45am** in school.

We would like to find out whether there is anything:

1. Happening at school that makes it difficult for them to get to school on time
2. Happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
3. We can do to make it easier for them to be on time for school

Using this information we will then agree an improvement plan with you to aid improvements in your child's punctuality to school.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Brear
Co-Headteacher