



# **Attendance Policy**

**February 2018**

Eastburn Junior and Infant school fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding. We recognise that all adults working with, or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them. Our school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with the: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2016) and 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings' (October 2015) and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015).

## **Introduction**

'Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school'.

School Attendance: Statutory guidance and departmental advice, DFE Aug 2013

Eastburn Junior and Infant School expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

- Bradford Education Authority's target for attendance is 96%.
- At Eastburn Junior and Infant School, we are continuously working towards our goal of 100% attendance for all pupils.

## **1. Aims**

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and to address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

## **2. Rights and responsibilities**

### **The Legal Framework**

There are legal obligations on:

- Parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register.
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school.
- The School will consistently apply the 'School Attendance: Statutory Guidance and Departmental Advice' document published in October 2014.
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

**Executive Head/Head of School:**

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave in line with Bradford Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Bradford Local Authority policies and procedures.

**Pastoral Manager:**

- To lead on/take responsibility for attendance/punctuality, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with and responding to parental enquires.
- To oversee the analysis of weekly/termly/yearly data and respond to findings.
- To meet with the School Administrator and School Business Manager to monitor the systems and structures, ensuring they are having an impact on pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these as well as setting attendance targets where appropriate.
- To monitor pupils with an attendance target.
- To liaise with external agencies such as the Education Social Worker and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used.
- To work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- To revise and amend this policy, as required.
- To produce weekly/termly/yearly data for the Leadership Team to analyse.
- To contact parents/carers by letter, where attendance has dropped below 96%.
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**Office Administrator**

- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school and no reason has been given.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform the Pastoral Manager, if there are any concerns relating to attendance or punctuality.
- To record reasons for absence and update class registers.
- To maintain SIMs attendance records in line with this policy.
- To report to the Local Authority, as requested.
- To oversee the admission and induction of new pupils.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

**Staff:**

- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- To ensure quality first teaching with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet the learners' needs.
- Establish effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance.
- To follow up on pupil absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought.
- **To promptly inform the Pastoral Manager, of pupils who persist with poor attendance.**
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality regularly and at Parents Consultation Meetings.

**Parents:**

- **To ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.**
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning by ensuring that their child attends school in the correct uniform, with the basic equipment required for lessons and in a fit state to learn.
- Avoid arranging medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school to on the first day of absence for their child.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.

Parents are given a summary of their roles and responsibilities with regards to attendance (Appendix 6).

**The Local Authority, through the Educational Social Worker, is expected to:**

- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Ensure that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

**3. Promoting Excellent Attendance**

Celebration Assemblies are held every week on Friday. The attendance figures for each class are read out. Classes with above 97% attendance are celebrated and the class with the highest attendance is able to come to school in non-uniform the following Friday.

**School Newsletter**

The school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target and what that means in terms of the number of days absent.

**Parent/Teacher Consultation Evenings**

This provides an opportunity for class teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share attendance concerns and discuss barriers to good attendance.

#### **4. Monitoring Attendance & Punctuality**

The school regularly monitors pupil attendance. When a child's attendance falls below 96% parents are notified by letter and a process of monitoring is started (Appendix 1 - Attendance Flow Chart).

##### **Morning Register**

Children are expected to arrive at school for 9:00am.

Class registers remain open until 9:10 a.m. At that point, the teacher should submit their final register and close down SIMs. The teacher may resubmit the register as many times as they wish before 9.10 a.m. (e.g. if a mistake has been made or a child has arrived slightly late) but at 9.10 a.m. the register must be correct and submitted.

From 9.10 a.m. the school playground gates are closed. **A child will be marked as 'late' if they arrive after 9.10 a.m.** The Office Administrator checks that the children who have arrived late have been marked 'L' on SIMs, corrects any mistakes and inputs codes for children who are known to be absent.

Children arriving after 9.30 a.m. will be marked as unauthorised absence (U) for the morning session.

The Administrator then begins first day absence calls.

##### **Afternoon Register**

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence. They should be completed by 1:10 p.m.

##### **Punctuality**

The school policy is to encourage punctuality. If a child is late and misses registration, a late mark will be recorded. Obviously the school will be sympathetic if this is for a good reason. If, however, a pattern of lateness starts to emerge, parents/carers will be informed in writing (Appendix 5).

As well as punctuality at the beginning of the school day, we also expect punctuality at the end of the day. Parents are expected to collect their children promptly at 3:20 p.m. (Reception Class) or 3.30 p.m. (Classes 1-6). Parents who are repeatedly late (more than 15 minutes after the end of the school day) will be sent a written reminder and may be charged the equivalent of a session in our after school club Fun Zone.

#### **5. Leave of Absence**

In line with Bradford Local Authority guidance and the 2013 Amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations, **leave for pupils during term time is not authorised under any circumstances.** The school recognises that taking children out of school may constitute a safeguarding risk and will make necessary enquiries, in order to be satisfied that the child is not at risk.

Headteachers may now only grant up to five days leave in term time where the circumstances are exceptional, for example:

- death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
- parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
- days of Religious Observance

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interests of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Parents who have exceptional circumstances, which lead them to request leave in term time for their child, should complete a leave of absence form and submit it to the Executive Head/Head of School. The Head Teacher will then make a decision, on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time. Parents may be required to meet with the Executive Head/Head of School before authorization is given.

An appeal against the Executive Head/Head of School's decision can be lodged with the Chair of the Governing Body by letter for their attention at the school.

### **Penalty Notices**

**If a child is taken out of school without the Head Teacher's authorisation, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken.**

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

'Penalty notices may be issued to the parent/s of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60 per parent per child. If this is not paid within 21 days, the amount rises to £120 per parent per child. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.'

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

'If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence.'

The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or make a Parenting Order.

Please note that 'parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

**These prosecutions are criminal proceedings and could result in a criminal record.**

Any pupil who is absent for a continuous period of 20 days, will be removed from the school register. This means, the pupil can no longer attend Eastburn Junior and Infant School and the parent/carer would need to re-apply for a place for their child. There is no automatic right for the child to be re-allocated a place unless there is a vacancy.



EASTBURN JUNIOR & INFANT SCHOOL  
GREEN CLOSE, EASTBURN, BD20 8UX  
Headteacher Mrs Jo Waterhouse  
Telephone 01535 653293  
Email: [office@eastburn.bradford.sch.uk](mailto:office@eastburn.bradford.sch.uk)

«date\_of\_printing»

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «reg»**

As part of our routine monitoring of attendance throughout school, we have noticed that your child's attendance is below 96%. This is below primary school targets and below average attendance at Eastburn Junior and Infant School.

We understand that there may well be reasons for this absence, such as illness, but we have a duty to inform you that your child's attendance is now below average.

We hope that by bringing this to your attention you can support your child and the school to ensure your child gains the greatest benefit that they can from their education, by regular school attendance.

In order to support you, we will be monitoring your child's attendance over a four week period starting from **XXXX** to **XXXX** with the aim of full attendance.

Should you wish to arrange an appointment to discuss any issues or concerns you feel may be impacting on your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours Sincerely

*Hilary Gornall*

**Mrs H Gornall**  
**Pastoral Manager**



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Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «reg»**

Following the letter to you dated **XXXX**, your child's attendance is still giving us cause for concern.

During the four week monitoring period your child has had **XXXX** sessions absence which equates to **XX%** attendance. This is below primary school targets and below average attendance at Eastburn Junior and Infant School.

You are invited to attend a meeting at Eastburn Junior and Infant school on **XXXX** to discuss the importance of your child's attendance. If this date/time is inconvenient, please contact me on the above number to discuss an alternative time to discuss this matter.

Failure to attend the meeting or re-schedule another date will leave me with no alternative but to contact the Education Social Work Team in Bradford.

Yours Sincerely

*J Waterhouse*

**Mrs Jo Waterhouse**  
**Head of School**



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Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «reg»**

You will be aware that we have contacted you previously to inform you of school's concerns in respect of your child's attendance.

During the second monitoring period your child has had **XXXX** sessions absence which equates to **XX%** attendance. This is significantly below primary school targets and well below average attendance at Eastburn Junior and Infant School. Your child has now moved into the persistent absentee (PA) bracket (90% and below).

Absence at this level will seriously affect your child's learning and will have a considerable impact on your child's education. Eastburn Junior and Infant School is committed to ensuring your child achieves their full potential and recognises that this can only be accomplished with your assistance and your child's full attendance at school.

We are writing to inform you that we will now be informing the Educational Social Work Team in Bradford in order to consider what further action should be taken.

Yours Sincerely

*J Waterhouse*

**Mrs Jo Waterhouse**  
**Head of School**



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«date\_of\_printing»

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «reg»**

Following routine monitoring of all pupils' punctuality, it has been identified that your child has arrived late (after 9.30 a.m.) for school on more than 2 occasions, during the previous month. I would like to bring to your attention that when your child is late for school, they miss valuable learning time. Quite often a particular subject is affected, which can then result in the child falling behind.

Children who arrive late also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can cause further absence. Children who arrive late are also often less settled and happy in school.

Good routines at the home are essential to assist children in establishing and maintaining punctuality. We rely on parents to assist their children in formulating routines and would ask that should you be experiencing difficulty ensuring your child arrives at school on time, that you contact school on (01535) 653293 to arrange a meeting to discuss and resolve the difficulties.

Please be aware that arrival after the close of register at 9.30 a.m. is recorded as an unauthorised late. This is an offence in law, which could result in enforcement proceedings if the late arrivals persist.

Yours Sincerely

*Hilary Gornall*

**Mrs H Gornall  
Pastoral Manager**



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Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname» «reg»**

You will be aware that Eastburn Junior and Infant School’s attendance policy stipulates that parents/guardians should contact school before 9.10 a.m. on the first day of absence. Unfortunately your child’s recent absence has been recorded as unauthorised on the school’s register, as a result of no explanation being provided.

We require you to complete the form below and return to school at your very earliest convenience giving the reason for your child’s absence. We must have a reason within ten days of the absence. If not, the absence will remain unauthorised.

Please be aware that unless you provide valid medical evidence, any authorisation of absence remains at school’s discretion.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours Sincerely

*Hilary Gornall*

**Mrs H Gornall  
Pastoral Manager**

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Childs Name: -----

Class: -----

Date of absence: -----

Reason for absence: -----

Childs GP contacted: Yes /No

Parent Name: (Print) -----

Parent Name: (Signature) -----

Current Date: -----