

Elmridge Primary School

BRIGHT FUTURES PUPIL ATTENDANCE GUIDANCE & PROCEDURES

(to be read in conjunction with Bright Futures Pupil Attendance Policy)

These are the specific pupil attendance guidance and procedures for Elmridge Primary school. The overarching policy can be found in the Trust Policies section of the website.

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1. Aims

- To ensure that overall school attendance is 97% or higher
- To raise the profile of the importance of high-level attendance among pupils, parents and other staff
- To outline a procedure for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies
- To eradicate persistent lateness
- To explain the legal processes for persistent lateness and absence

2. Legislation and guidance

By law, all children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens - either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. As a last resort, schools and local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

We seek to operate in ways which maximise pupil potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

We fulfil our responsibilities in respect of taking a morning and afternoon session registration; of being open for the required 190 pupil school days unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance, and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes.

3. School procedures

3.1. Attendance register

In line with Department for Education guidance, Elmridge Primary School will take the attendance register at **8:50am**. The morning register will close at **9:05am**, meaning any subsequent pupil arrival will be coded as an unauthorised absence unless there is sufficient reason for this to be authorised.

3.2. Unplanned absence

If a pupil is absent from the school, it is vital that a parent contacts the school at the earliest opportunity to provide a reason for absence, and no later than 9:00am. Primarily, pupil absence should be communicated via the school's absence line (0161 980 4941) or parent mail. In the event that absence cannot be communicated by these channels please email admin@eps.bright-futures.co.uk.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no adequate reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. The decision and authority to authorise an absence lies with the school in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996. Parents cannot authorise absence. Where deemed necessary, the school reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness. After five days of authorised absence across the academic year, or three days of consecutive authorised absence, the school will unauthorise all subsequent absences. The process by which the school determines authorisation of absence can be found in Appendix A.

3.3. Medical or dental appointments

It is an expectation of the school that medical and dental appointments are taken out of school time. Missing lessons, even for medical and dental appointments, has a detrimental impact on pupil progress

and achievement.

We recognise that it is not always possible to schedule appointments out of school time. In the rare occasion that a pupil must attend a medical appointment during school time, parents must notify the school office in advance and provide evidence of the appointment. Patterns of medical and dental appointments during school sessions over a period of time will result in further follow up investigation and action. Regardless of the reason, all medical appointments are recorded as an absence, and will impact upon the pupil's overall attendance percentage.

EMOTIONALLY BASED SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE (EBSNA)

Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) is a term used to describe children and young people who experience challenges in attending school due to negative feelings (such as anxiety). Where there are emotional, or mental health reasons for non-attendance, school will work with pupils and parents/carers at the earliest possible opportunity to try to understand the barriers to attendance, and where possible, to develop a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to overcome these barriers and support to maximise face-to-face attendance. A plan will be formulated and after implementation will be regularly reviewed.

Where a pupil has been absent for 15 days (consecutive or in total due to emotional health) school will notify the Local Authority.

School will work with the Local Authority to determine whether to formalise support or to enforce through legal intervention. In instances of long-term or repeated absence for EBSNA, school will seek medical evidence to assist in assessing whether additional support is needed.

4. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance is a whole school initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, pupils and all staff.

The table below highlights our approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. This is led by the Attendance Lead who works with staff to monitor and improve attendance, while raising the profile and emphasising the importance of attendance at individual and whole school level.

| Colour | Attendance % | Concern |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Green | 97-100% | No Concern-best chance of academic success |
| Yellow | 95-96.9% | Concern-Risk of underachievement |
| Amber | 93-94.9% | Serious risk of underachievement |
| Pink | 90-92.9% | Severe risk of underachievement |
| Red | 0-89.9% | Extreme Risk-Persistent Absentee |

In order to promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, we use a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies. As appropriate to pupil age these include:

- *Weekly class attendance award (Be there bear)*

- *Display class attendance winner*
- *Half termly certificates*
- *Dojos*
- *Letters home*

5. Attendance monitoring

Elmridge has an escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concern.

The principles underpinning the model will be used to promote consistency for all classes. In summary these are as follows:

- *The attendance statistics for each class is announced in weekly Good News in assembly and shared on the weekly newsletter with parents*
- *Half termly 100% attendance certificates are awarded to pupils*
- *Daily dojos awarded for being in school on time*
- *Be There Bear and an additional play time is awarded each week to the class with the best attendance*
- *Regular attendance reminders are shared on the weekly newsletter and the impact of missed education*

In cases that levels of attendance decrease, we will make use of the following escalation guidance:

1. **97% - 100%, or increased attendance**- Pupils in this group are in the best possible position to achieve their full potential, class teachers will celebrate these pupils weekly, and certificates will be awarded at the end of each half term accordingly.
2. **Yellow 95% – 96.9%, or an initial fall in attendance** - Pupils in this group will be closely monitored and termly letters will be sent home highlighting the importance of good attendance.
3. **Amber 93% - 94.9%, or consecutive weeks of falling attendance** – Pupils in this group will be closely monitored and termly letters will be sent home highlighting the importance of good attendance.
4. **Pink 90% - 92.9%, or repeated consecutive or non-consecutive weeks of falling attendance** – Parents will be invited in to meet with the Attendance Lead to discuss barriers and the impact of missed education. At this point, as the pupil is close to falling below the Government Persistent Absentee rate, a letter will be issued stating further legal action if absence does not improve.
5. **Red 0 - 89.9%, or persistent consecutive or non-consecutive weeks of falling attendance** - Parents will be invited in to meet with the Attendance Lead to discuss barriers and the impact of missed education and a series of actions to support improvement will be agreed, delegated and recorded. The Attendance Lead will work closely with class teachers to ensure any missed learning time is caught up where possible.

At this point, the pupil has fallen below the Government Persistent Absentee rate, a letter will be issued. As this attendance percentage continues to fall below the Government Persistent Absence target, it may be necessary to refer the poor attendance to the Local Authority. This

includes taking legal action where required.

Lateness and punctuality

It is our responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if a pupil attends regularly and punctually. At Elmridge, we expect all pupils to arrive at school on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A pupil arriving late will disrupt not only their own continuity of learning but also that of others. Patterns of lateness over a period of time will result in further follow up investigation and action.

All pupils should arrive at school by 8:50am ready for registration. Lessons begin at 9:00am. The register will close at 9:05am, and subsequent pupil arrivals will be recorded as a late if they arrive to school between 9:05am – 9:30am. Any arrival after 9:30am will be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless there is valid reason for this to be authorised.

7. Following up absence

Parents of a pupil who is not present in school will be notified of their absence. Parents have the responsibility to inform us of pupil absence. It is a safeguarding priority for us to know the whereabouts of all pupils.

Absences will be followed up through the attendance intervention system, which will include, but is not limited:

- i. Phone calls to parents/ carers
- ii. Attendance Letters
- iii. Meetings with Attendance lead or a member of SLT
- iv. Home Visits

7.2 Reporting to parents and carers

In order to support parents in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual pupil attendance, we seek to keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents on attendance issues.

Methods include:

- Unexplained/unaccounted for absence letter asking for reasons
- Escalating letters warning of concerns
- Parental meetings
- Attendance percentages included on pupil reports and reported annually
- Discussion at Parents' Evenings

8. Authorised and unauthorised absence

8.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents should avoid making routine appointments for pupils during the school day. Parents should not take family holidays during the term time period.

Parents should be advised that leave of absence can only be authorised at the discretion of the Head of School and will only be agreed in very exceptional circumstances. Further information regarding this can

be found in the Bright Futures Educational Trust Attendance and Punctuality Policy. On the rare occasion that absences are requested, this should be submitted via an absence leave request form which are available at the main office. It should be submitted to the office no later than 7 days before the planned absence.

8.2 Legal sanctions

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school on a regular and punctual basis. Should any pupil's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be contacted by a member of SLT. We will work in partnership with Trafford Borough Council if legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

When a pupil persistently arrives late to school, investigations will take place to determine the reason, and support offered where appropriate to rectify the situation. Where the arrival time is after the close of registration and investigations show that there is not an acceptable reason, we can request that a Penalty Notice is issued by the Education Welfare Team provided that these sessions have been coded U (Unauthorised Absence).

A fixed penalty notice can be issued without warning in whereby:

- A leave of absence of 4 days (8 sessions) or more was taken during term time without the school's consent.
- If an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken and there have been instances of previous unauthorised absences in an 8 week period. This can be one day.
- Where a parent has taken the pupil on holiday during term-time with the school's authorisation and has failed to return the pupil to school on the date agreed.

The penalty is a £60 fine, if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within the 42 day period, a prosecution will be sought.

- Prosecution for unauthorised absence: It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. If a pupil's attendance continues to decline, and unauthorised absence increases despite efforts by school to support the pupil in attending school, a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Service.

9. Children at Risk of Missing Education

Policies and guidance related to Children at Risk of Missing Education can be found in the Bright Futures Pupil Attendance Policy.

The contact for Local Authority Attendance issues is pupil.absence@trafford.gov.uk

10. Pupils leaving school and Removal from Roll

Elmridge has a commitment to safeguard pupils. Therefore, destination of all pupils who leave the school will be tracked.

School leaders will ensure that detailed records are kept for pupils who stop attending school and are removed from the roll/admissions register.

Appendix 1: The procedure by which school determines unauthorised absence

