Eaves Primary School

Excellence in Everything



Attendance Policy

Status	Statutory
Responsible Governors Committee	Governing Body
Responsible Person	Mrs M Lawrenson
Review Date	March 2027
Last Amended Date	March 2026

Introduction

The parents/carers of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full – time education suitable to his / her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he / she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. **1996 Education Act. Section 7**

The parents/carers of a child of compulsory school age registered at school failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law. **1996 Education Act Section 444**

Aim

To encourage the pupils of Eaves Primary School to attend school as much as possible in order that they might get the maximum benefit from the education provided.

Objectives

- To encourage maximum attendance at school
- To encourage promptness
- To develop in our pupils, a sense of pride in their attendance and punctuality

The school day

Children are admitted into school between 8:40am and 8:55am.

Registration begins at 8:45am. The school gates are locked at 8:55am. Children arriving after this time must enter school via the main office so as to receive a mark.

Registration ends at 9:00am, children arriving between 9am and 9.14am will be coded 'L' late on the register.

Children arriving after 9.15am will be coded 'U' this counts as an unauthorised absence OR any other code the school decides to record the late arrival correctly.

Afternoon registers close at 1pm

School takes punctuality very seriously. If parents/carers do not address this issue promptly it can lead to legal sanctions such as a Penalty Notice fine.

Parents/carers of children who arrive late on a regular basis will be invited into school to discuss the issues and concerns around the punctuality of their child.

Parents/carers of pupils arriving late are required to sign-in using the Inventry system situated in the entrance hall. Here the parents/carers must give a reason for lateness.

Authorised/Unauthorised absence

All absences should be explained by the parents/carers before 9.30am or as soon as possible on the first day of absence (and subsequent days) by email, telephone call, School Spider or personally.

School employs a 'first day response' system for chasing up unexplained absence, this is a safeguarding strategy. If school cannot make contact with parents/carers, the schools Education Welfare Officer may be requested to visit the home to find out the reason why child/ren are absent. School will then decide whether or not to authorise the absence.

Parents/carers are requested to return their child to school as soon as possible after an absence even if there is only one day of the school week left. Children taking a course of medication should return to school as soon as possible, not wait until the end of the course. If your child has been prescribed antibiotics that are needed four times a day, school can administer.

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Unavoidable medical appointments (with evidence)
- Days of religious observance (with evidence)
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

Please note, even authorised absence reduces your child's attendance figure.

When a child is absent from school due to illness we will always ask if parents/carers have any medical evidence. This is part of our attendance procedures and is not because reasons for absence are not believed.

If a child's absence becomes a cause for concern, school **will insist** on medical evidence in order to authorise further absences. If medical evidence is not provided the absences will be unauthorised.

The following medical evidence will be considered by the school:

- A signed and dated medical appointment card
- A copy of a medical appointment letter
- Sight of prescription medicine (must include name of child and date issued)
- Signed and dated 'Care at the chemist' evidence.
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Parents/carers will not be asked for doctor's notes that incur a cost.

Absence from school will **not** be authorised if school do not accept the reason given by the parents/carers. If school believe that the reason is not appropriate or has been used many times before, the absence will be unauthorised. Examples of this could be linked to siblings always being absent at the same time or the absence always falling on a particular day of the week and medical evidence has not been provided to cover the period in question.

Parents/carers of children with a high incidence of unauthorised absence may be subjected to Legal Sanctions such as Penalty Notice fines OR prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Leave of absence during term time

School cannot authorise time off for family holidays during term time and parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of school for such holidays.

Parents/carers can only apply for leave of absence during term time in 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents/carers must apply in writing to the Headteacher well in advance of the absence.

For family holidays/planned absences, parents/carers should complete a 'Leave of Absence' application form (available from the school office or via the school website) and may be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the application.

The Headteacher will decide if the Leave will be granted and how many days will be authorised.

If the Headteacher does not grant an application for leave of absence and parents/carers decide to take the leave anyway, the absence will be unauthorised.

If the unauthorised absence meets the Local Authority (LA) Penalty Notice threshold as detailed in the LA Penalty Notice Code of Conduct parents/carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice Fine. Penalty Notice Fines can be issued to each parent/carer for every child concerned.

Absence from school is not authorised for travelling to competitions. Weddings during school time are not classed as exceptional circumstance.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

1. Parents/carers and pupils will be reminded regularly (via letters, newsletters, parent/carers' evenings etc.) of the importance and value of good attendance.

2. Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice.

3. Parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern may be invited to agree an attendance support plan OR a Notice to Improve meeting with the safeguarding team to help improve their child's attendance; this may include supportive referrals to the school nurse or a parenting course.

4. A pupil with an attendance of 90% or below is categorised by the government as **Persistent Absentee (PA).** All PA's will be targeted for improvement. Parents/carers of PA's with a high incidence of unauthorised absence may be the subjects of legal sanctions including **Penalty Notices** OR **Prosecutions in the Magistrates Court**. Medical evidence is required of a pupil whose attendance meets this criteria.

5. The school will support Pupils who are absent through long term chronic or life-threatening illness by adhering to current government guidance for children with medical needs, this may involve a plan of support with home tuition and a re-integration plan back into school.

6. Teachers and support staff who become aware of issues which may lead to attendance difficulties will report the issues in a timely manner to the Headteacher.

7. When appropriate school will liaise with other agencies – Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychology Service, Social Services, the School Nurse and other agencies to support and help pupils with attendance difficulties.

Rewards for promoting good attendance

1. Each week SAM, the School Attendance Matters monkey, is awarded to the class achieving the highest percentage attendance. Early Bird is awarded to the class that achieves the least number of late marks.
2. Weekly class attendance is displayed on each of the classroom doors and recorded on the weekly newsletter. Each class has a Mr Potato Head to add pieces to. If a class gets 99% attendance, they will earn one piece and 100% attendance they will earn two pieces.
3. The class to complete their model first will earn a reward. Mr Potato Heads are displayed in a prominent place outside each classroom so that all the children can see

how well they are doing. The class will need to work together and provide support for each other. Weekly attendance is displayed outside each classroom.

4. Attendance badges are awarded at the end of the term. To gain an attendance badge, a pupil should have 100% attendance per term and no more than 2 late marks.
5. To achieve a yearly attendance badge, pupils should have 100% attendance and no more than 3 late marks.
6. At the end of each term the class with the highest attendance receives a treat. The treat will be personalised to the cohort of children.

Parental/Carer acknowledgement

1. When there is an improvement in either punctuality or attendance following a letter from the Headteacher, parents/carers are sent a letter commending them on this improvement.

Penalty Notices

Eaves Primary School have adopted the use of Penalty Notice fines to address unauthorised absence as stated in the LA Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Penalty Notices can be considered in the following circumstances:

- Where a child has a minimum of 10 school sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence within a ten-week period
- Where a child has 10 school sessions coded as 'U' late after the register has closed recorded
- Where a child has 10 sessions (5 days) coded 'G' unauthorised holiday recorded

Information for parents

- Parents/carers are informed of the school's policy on attendance and punctuality at regular intervals through the school newsletter and of the procedures for informing school about their child's absence/need for punctuality. A copy of the Attendance Policy is available to all parents/carers and parents/carers are informed when it is reviewed in school by staff and Governors.
- Attendance figures are recorded in the Headteacher's termly report to Governors. These figures show the percentage of attendance of the pupils and the percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences. These figures are also returned to the DFCS via the statistical returns that the school is required to complete.
- A pupil's attendance percentage, the number of unauthorised absences and the number of lates are shown on the child's end of year report.

Rights and Responsibilities

- Eaves Primary School expects pupils to attend school regularly and to arrive on time. The school will encourage good attendance and will investigate all absenteeism. School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality. The school will work closely with parents/carers should attendance/punctuality give cause for concern.

Parents/carers

- Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring regular and punctual attendance and are responsible for informing the school as soon as possible about the reason for their child's non-attendance at school. Parents/carers can expect the school to keep them fully informed on their child's progress.

Pupils

- Pupils will ensure that they attend regularly and are on time where their age is appropriate. Pupils will have their individual records of attendance / punctuality acknowledged by the school.

Attendance Monitoring

- Currently the Arbor Attendance Module is used to assist the monitoring of attendance. Information is manually inputted into the system twice daily by the class teacher.

Important document links;



Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)



Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Application for Leave of Absence during term time

From August 2024 the law was changed regarding holidays during term time. The Headteacher can now only grant leave of absence in **EXCEPTIONAL circumstances**.
Parents/carers applying to remove their child from school during term time must give advance notice and should provide evidence to support the application.
Parents/carers may submit any appropriate evidence to support the exceptional circumstance outlined below. The Headteacher will then consider authorising or unauthorising the absence.

Please be aware you may be issued with a Penalty Notice if you decide to go ahead with an unauthorised absence during term time and the absence meets the LA penalty notice criteria of 10 sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence in a ten school week period. Penalty Notices are issued per parent/carer per child.

Further Information on the law regarding Leave of Absence during term time and Penalty Notices for unauthorised school absence can be found at GOV.UK.

Name of pupil (s)	**Year group**

Name of parents/carers	
1:	Relationship:
2:	Relationship:
Address (if different from address of child): Telephone No:	

Date of leave of absence	
From:	To:
Total number of days:	

Please list your reasons including any exceptional circumstances for removing your child/children from school during term time. Please attach any appropriate evidence to support your application.

I understand that the absences applied for may be recorded as **unauthorised absences** on my child/children's attendance record and that if I go ahead with an unauthorised absence I may be issued with one or more Penalty Notices.

Signed …… Date ……

Name of parents/carers ……...

Notice of Leave of Absence during term time for holidays

From August 2024 the law changed regarding holidays during term time.

Parents applying to remove their child from school during term time must give advanced notice.

Please be aware you will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if you decide to go ahead with the unauthorised holiday during term time and the absence meets the LA penalty notice criteria of 10 sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence in a ten school week period. Fixed Penalty Notices are issued per parent/carer per child.

Further Information on the law regarding Leave of Absence during term time and Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised school absence can be found at GOV.UK.

Name of pupil (s)	**Year group**

Name of parent/carers	
1:	Relationship:
2:	Relationship:
Address (if different from address of child): Telephone No:	

Date of leave of absence	
From:	To:
Total number of days:	
Please provide an explanation for the request for leave of absence. Please attach any appropriate evidence.	

I understand that the absences applied for will be recorded as **unauthorised absences** on my child/children's attendance record and that if I go ahead with an unauthorised absence, I may be issued with one or more Fixed Penalty Notices.

Signed …… Date ……...

Name of parents/carers

…….....