



**Elmridge
Primary School**

BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Version			
Date	Document Version	Document Revision History	Document Author/Reviser
14.4.16	1.0	Revised document from AH (provided by Place Group on AH conversion	M Edmundson
1.9.17	1.1	Amended to suit updated procedures	M Edmundson
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5.1.22	1.5	Annual Review and removal of references to the Dunham Trust-change of start times in the morning	M Edmundson

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months in light of local and Government legislation.

Introduction

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, gender, religion, ability and any special needs s/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Elmridge Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all of its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school. This policy has been developed in consultation with governors, teachers, pupils, parents and carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupils' successes and achievements
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

Statements of expectations;

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

What is expected of pupils:

- ◆ To respect themselves and others
- ◆ To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
- ◆ To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
- ◆ To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging
- ◆ To be happy and encourage others to feel happy

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children. If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where attendance to school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school and social services where such a child's attendance is irregular.

What is expected of parents:

- ◆ To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum
- ◆ To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence
- ◆ To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- ◆ To work closely with the school to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance

- ◆ To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in special / exceptional circumstances.
- ◆ To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATs or the numeracy and literacy hour
- ◆ To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements

Elmridge Primary School will endeavour to provide an environment within its schools that is conducive in educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. Each school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance has to be taken twice each day, once at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

What is expected of Elmridge Primary School :

- ◆ To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
- ◆ To meet the legal requirements set out by Government
- ◆ To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
- ◆ To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
- ◆ To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1995 education act using digital registering systems as appropriate
- ◆ To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance
- ◆ To encourage open communication channels between home and school
- ◆ To develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees
- ◆ To develop attendance targets for each school year based on previous attendance and national averages
- ◆ To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children. The Local Authority provides support to schools and parents to fulfil their legal duty. The LEA as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education act 1996. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO), an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

The Law

By law, parents are required to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and attend regularly. Absence should only occur when a child is unfit to learn or has a day of religious observance.

Arrival and registration

The school operates a rolling start to the day between 8.45 and 8.55am. Registers are taken at 8.55am. After 8.55am, the front and back gates are locked and school can only be accessed via the front door. The register is taken twice a day. A day counts as 2 attendances.

Morning registration ends at 8.55 am. If a child arrives after the registration period he/she will be marked in as Late. After 9.30 am this will become an unauthorised Absence.

The afternoon register is taken at the start of the afternoon teaching session. It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the school office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of fire as an appendix to class registers.

Illness and medical appointments:

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

Absence

The relevant school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning for the duration of the absence. Parents should inform school by phone or letter on the first day of absence unless unexpected circumstances mean this information can only arrive in school after the absence. The absence note needs to be dated.

Regulations

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995
Section 8(1) "Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school"
Section 8(3) of this act gives the school discretionary powers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of annual holiday during term time.
Holidays in term time will not be authorised by schools.

Leave of Absence

Parents may apply for leave from school for their child under 'exceptional circumstances'. To do this they should apply directly to the relevant Head of School who may authorise the absence if it fits within the 'exceptional circumstances' remit.

Leave of absence for pupils will never be authorised during National Testing dates.

Work will not be set for completion during leave of absence granted under 'exceptional circumstances', but children should be encouraged to read and keep a diary of their experiences.

Unauthorised Absence

Parents who decide to take a holiday without permission, will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on a child's record and are monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Officer, and could result in a fine or court action.

Arrangements for absence in other circumstances

Family bereavement and exceptional circumstances:

Sudden, serious circumstances do occur, rarely, when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school. It is essential that school is informed by the parent of the circumstances so that the appropriate code can be written in the register.

Early Identification

If a class teacher has particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality the Head of School will be informed. The school attendance officer will also inform the Head of School of any child whose attendance has dropped below 91%.

Home School Partnership

Elmridge Primary School will continue to fulfil its legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. Every member of staff working within Elmridge Primary School is committed to working with all parents and children to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.