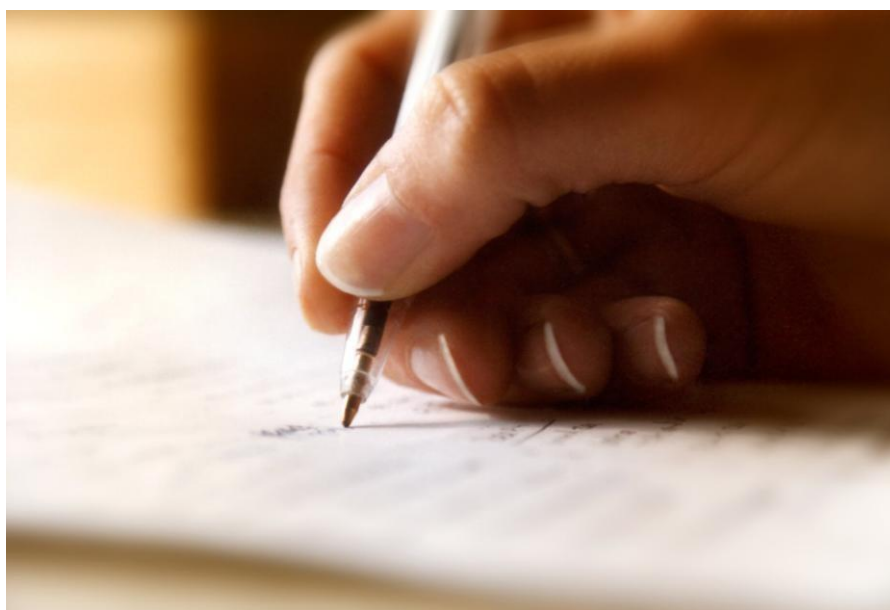# EASTINGTON   PRIMARY   SCHOOL

'It's just great when we're all here!'
Year 4 pupil

Attendance Policy

Reviewed September 2021
(Next review September 2022)

Attendance Policy

One of the key features that ensures pupil progress is regular, punctual attendance. Studies have shown that in general pupils perform better in primary and secondary schools if they have good attendance.

It is important that all pupils have uninterrupted access to the curriculum and experiences that enable them to develop their full potential in all areas. In addition regular and punctual attendance supports the development of basic skills needed for their future as employees and citizens. Missing lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and children with poor attendance usually achieve less in both primary and secondary school. As a result of this the governors and staff of Eastington Primary School aim to maximise attendance, in partnership with families/carers and the Gloucestershire Local Authority (GLA) Education, Performance and Inclusion team (EP&I), through ensuring that pupils attend regularly and punctually.

Restrictions on attendance have been put in place due Covid-19 in recent year. Please read the Attendance Covid Addendum alongside this policy when restrictions are in place due to covid – 19.

Aims:
The aim of this policy is to clarify the responsibilities of school and parents/carers in working together to ensure pupils are safe and have access to their educational rights. It also sets out the procedures which ensure this within our school.

Eastington Primary requests that all parents:
- Encourage a positive attitude towards school and their child by showing an interest in the life of the school.
- Ensure their children attend school regularly. This is a legal duty of all parents.
- **Ensure their child/ren arrive punctually and by 8.50** at the latest: school gates open at 8:40am for the morning session, with line-up & pupil registration at 8:50am and 1:30pm every day.
- Ensure their child arrives at school prepared and ready to start their school day positively: dressed, having had breakfast, calm etc. If a child is struggling with this then please talk to the classteacher as soon as possible - working together for a child is the most powerful and effective way forward.
- Inform the school office as soon as possible if their child is unable to attend school on that day.
- Ensure pupils remain off school for 48 hours after sickness or diarrhoea (NHS Guidance).
- Make every effort not to arrange dental or similar appointments during school hours. If this cannot be avoided then afternoon sessions impact less on core subjects.
- Do not take their child/ren on holidays during term time.
- Inform the school office of changes to contact details swiftly, including:
  1. A new phone number for us to use as for contact.
  2. If their child is moving to a new home, discuss this with us and inform the school office of the parent they will live with, the new home address and the date of move.

3. If their child is moving to a new school, discuss this with us and inform the school office of the new school name/address and the date started/planned date to start.

As a school we:

- Ensure that the school is welcoming and every child is valued.
- Provide a Home / School Agreement to all parents when their child is registered at the school clearly defining the 'contract' of what is expected from all parties, including attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure the school site is open at the stated times.
- Ensure the regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance for am/pm sessions each day by the class teacher. See agreed code: Appendix 2. Registers are returned to the office when the registration period has closed each morning and afternoon.
- If school is not informed of a child's absence, contact will be made with parents as soon as possible (including before and after school attendance at clubs). This will always be on the first day of absence (parental contact numbers held in office).
- When parents notify the school of their child's absence after the register has been taken, the office informs the appropriate member of staff and the correct symbol recorded in the register. See agreed code: Appendix 2.
- All pupils leaving or entering the premises outside of the regular drop off/pick up time are logged in/out in the pupil diary log by the Admin Officer to ensure an accurate list of pupils on site is recorded in case of fire.
- Consider 'Request for Absence forms' for parents who wish to take pupils out in term time in a case by case approach. EG: no holidays will be authorised in term time, exceptional circumstances such as attending a funeral will be authorised etc..
- In the event of a Fire, class registers and the pupil diary log, which is used to log pupils arriving late/leaving early, (along with the visitor register) will be taken to the agreed safety area by the Admin officer/Headteacher (or appointed named person) to support safe fire evacuation. Information will be shared with emergency services at the end of the roll call, ie: that the building is unoccupied and all personnel are accounted for or not.
- Notify the GLA within 5 days if a new pupil is joining the school roll (unless a Reception pupil in September).
- Inform the GLA of pupils whose parents have opted for home education.
- Inform GLA of pupils on a part time timetable.
- Notify GLA of children missing in education. (See Appendix 1)
- Discuss poor attendance with parents so they fulfil their parental responsibility to ensure their child/children are at school on time, daily and the education of their child is not impaired. The school reserves the right to use Penalty Notices where parents do not engage with the school and improve the attendance of their child/ren. In Gloucestershire the EP&I team has responsibility for Penalty Notices on behalf of the Local Authority.
- Hold Attendance Improvement Meetings if needed to support improvement in attendance. Forms can be used to support the process of improving the attendance of a pupil – see appendix 4. Our aim is always to work with parents/carers, however, penalty notices can be used if improvement is not seen.
- Admin Officer, SLT & Headteacher monitor attendance looking at authorised attendance, unauthorised attendance and trends/patterns.
- The attendance figures for each pupil will be reported to parents on the annual report

- Overall attendance figures for pupil groups are monitored and questioned by the Governing Body to support good attendance.

Parental requests for absence in term time

DfE guidance is clear that Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. They state: 'The application must be made in advance and the headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.'

From 1st September 2013, the new law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday in term time. Headteachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

Children at risk of Missing in Education (CME)

Children Missing Education (CME) are a vulnerable group and as such all agencies who work with children have a duty to support the LA to ensure all children are safe and looked after appropriately. CME refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is **not** registered at any formally approved education activity eg school, alternative provision, elective home education, **and** has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'.

CME also includes those children who are **missing** (family whereabouts unknown), and are usually children who are registered on a school roll / alternative provision. This might be a child who is not at their last known address **and either**

- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected, or
- has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
- left school suddenly and the destination is unknown

It is our responsibility as a school to work with the LA Education Performance and Inclusion team, by making referrals. See Appendix 1.

Eastington Governors will:

- Set an agreed target for attendance each year and monitor this through the Standards of Achievement Committee (**current target is 97%)**
- Set up a working party to discuss absence whenever needed due to national or school changes.
- Maintain a positive approach in supporting the school to achieve good attendance
- Charge the Headteacher to maintain the correct procedures regarding attendance on a day to day basis including liaising with the appropriate external agencies from GLA with all matters related to attendance.

How do we know if we are successful?

- Pupils display a positive attitude to learning and enjoy being part of the school life.
- Attendance rates are above national.
- Attendance is good (in line with or above school's agreed target).

- Children are safe through the daily monitoring of registers to identify absent pupils.
- Children are safe through swift action if a pupil is at risk of being missing in education.
- Positive feedback from GLA Education Performance and Inclusion team during monitoring/advisory visits.

Records

- In accordance with the Local Authority, police, the Governors and Headteacher of Eastington School will ensure that individual records of attendance will be maintained. These will be retained for a period of no less than 25 years.

APPENDIX 1

CHILD MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME) REFERRAL FORM - child whose family whereabouts are unknown

Your Details	Name:			Date:
	School			
Child and family details	Forename(s):		Surname	
	DOB:		Gender:	
	Date last in education:		Date last seen:	
	Parent(s) names and all contact details:			
CME criteria (Please indicate)	All attempts to contact the family have failed (see checklist below)			
	Family known to have moved away but destination school unknown			
	Child did not take up allocated school place and attempts to contact have failed			

Checklist		
Action	**Date completed**	**Outcome**
Carry out first day calling		
Attempt to get in touch with all known emergency contacts (at various times of day) *Provide contact details*		
Gather further information including details of siblings from other agencies, wider school community (eg staff, other pupils, friends)		
Home visit within 5 school days if appropriate		
Social Media searches – eg contact details of a parent or school noted on Facebook		

If a child is subject to a child protection plan, is a child in care or there are reasons to be concerned for the child's safety, inform Social Care immediately and follow GSCB procedures.

If child is not located following checks, please send referral form to the Education,

Performance and Inclusion team (EP&I) **no later than the tenth day of absence** and continue checks as appropriate.

The EP&I team will make further enquiries and attempts to locate the family including making contact with other LAs and CME Officers. In rare cases where the child cannot be located the Data Officer will publish a message on the national Schools 2 Schools secure website. The school should then create a CTF using XXX XXXX (with advice from the EP&I team).

Please return this with any attachments or relevant information to:

Education Performance & Inclusion, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2TP
Email: missingpupils@gloucestershire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2

ATTENDANCE CODES (DfE Guidance Aug 2016)

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes most frequently used are in red. The full list of codes are:

Present at School
Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed
Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity
An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:
Code B: Off-site educational activity
This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the

safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Consortia Schools
Pupils attending consortia schools as part of their course only need to be placed on the registers of their 'main' school rather than on all of the schools they attend. They should be treated as guest pupils at the other consortia schools. The consortia schools however, must ensure they have suitable systems in place for monitoring and reporting the attendance and absence of the pupils involved, which must be shared with the 'main' school.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment
This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.
The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.
Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity
This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip
This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience
Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's

home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils

Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

APPENDIX 3

Attendance Improvement Meeting: Parenting Agreement

Name:	Year:		Date Plan Drawn up:
Present at meeting:			
Current Attendance %:		Authorise %:	Unauthorised %:
Background:			
Pupil agrees to:			
Parent(s) or Carer agrees to:			
School agrees to:			

Other Agency agrees to:	

Agreed Attendance Target: *No unauthorised absence and *	**Planned Review date:**

As Parent/Carer of …………………………………………. I understand that it is a legal requirement that he/she has access to education daily.

Pupil…………………………………. School………………………………….

Parent………………………………… Other………………………………….

Attendance Improvement Meeting: Parenting Agreement – Review 1

Name:	Year:	Date of review:
Present at meeting:		

Initial AIM Parenting Contract Date :	Current attendance	**%**

Sessions of absence since AIM meeting:			
Authorised		Unauthorised	

Comments:

Action (please indicate below)	
Targets met – No further action	
Improvement but targets not met – plan to continue –	

Review date	
Targets not met – Request for support/enforcement action to Education Performance and Inclusion Team	14

Planned Review date: (If appropriate)

As Parent/Carer of …………………………………………………. I understand that it is a legal requirement that he/she has access to education daily.

Pupil……………………………………………   School…………………………………………….

Parent…………………………………………… Other…………………………………………….

APPENDIX 4

PENALTY NOTICE INFORMATION

In Gloucestershire the EP&I team has responsibility for Penalty Notices on behalf of the Local Authority.

The Data Officer:
- Receives requests to issue Penalty Notices from schools in Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire Constabulary and neighbouring LAs.
- Issues the Penalty Notices
- Reports annually on the use and outcomes of Fixed Penalty Notices

Circumstances when a Penalty Notice can be issued

A Penalty Notice can only be issued when an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason or in one of the following circumstances of unauthorised absence:

Holiday during term time when the school has not authorised the absence and the child has missed at least 10 sessions within a week period. (The pupil must have been recorded with at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during the 10 weeks immediately preceding the issue of a warning letter)

Persistent late arrival at school after the registers have closed, and where the U code is used on the attendance certificate on at least 10 occasions within a 10 week period.

Excluded Pupil found in a public place within the first 5 days of any exclusion.