Eastcroft Park Primary School

Attendance Policy

2015
Eastcroft Park Attendance Policy

Philosophy

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places pupils at risk and in some cases it can result in pupils being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Similarly persistent lateness is disruptive to the individual child, the teacher and the rest of the class leading to loss of valuable teaching time. If allowed to go unchecked this could set a pattern for future behaviour and encourage disaffection.

Aims

To:
- Maximise attendance and punctuality at Eastcroft Park.
- Make attendance and punctuality a key task for everybody at Eastcroft Park.
- Change the prevalent culture that accepts poor attendance and punctuality as the norm.

To achieve these aims the school will:
- Monitor attendance and punctuality closely.
- Communicate effectively the policy for attendance and punctuality.
- Work in partnership with parents.
- Work closely with the SAIO, Health Service and Social Services.

The school continues to work hard to change attitudes in this hard to shift area in the following ways:
- The school recognises the importance of securing acceptable levels of attendance and this has a high priority throughout the school.
- PASS data and attendance data analysis is used for early identification of those children who are in danger of becoming poor attendees and support is put in place.
- The Learning Mentor monitors attendance and punctuality on a daily basis and supports those children and families who are in danger of falling below expected levels.
- The Learning Mentor provides personalised support for children with attendance or punctuality concerns.
- Regular meetings are held with the School Attendance Service to discuss issues and to agree support for vulnerable groups.
- First day response is in place for all children.
- Attendance and punctuality policy is in place and revised and updated annually.
- Good attendance and punctuality is celebrated during special assemblies with prizes and certificates.
The school has an extensive programme of extra curricular activities and events.
The new curriculum has been designed to engage all pupils in exciting topics and activities which we feel has impacted on the recent improved attendance rates.

Policy into Practice.

Responsibility of the school
The school uses a computerised registration system – “Pupil registration Form” – produced by SIMS.net. This is centrally collated by the administration staff.
It is part of a teacher’s professional duties to register the attendance of pupils (School Teacher’s Pay and Conditions Document 1993). This is regarded as an integral and key part of the school day as was intended in law. The register must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session when pupils are marked present or absent. Particular attention should be made to accurate registration as registers may be used in evidence in cases were parents are prosecuted for school attendance offences. (See appendix 1).
The Education Regulations (Pupils’ Attendance Records) 1991 make it a legal requirement for all schools to distinguish in their attendance registers between authorised and unauthorised absences.
It is a legal requirement for schools to include in their prospectus information on rates of unauthorised attendance.

Only the school can approve absence, not the parent. The fact that the parent has offered a note or other notification (telephone call or personal contact) does not oblige the school to accept the explanation as a valid reason for absence. If after investigation or if no explanation is offered for an absence, it should be treated as unauthorised. Where parentally condoned unjustified absence appears to be a problem the Headteacher should be informed at an early stage. The learning Mentor may then decide to refer the case to the School Attendance Service, the School Health Service and / or Social Services. Similarly, any child whose attendance falls below 85% should be referred to the Headteacher. If there are further concerns then refer to S.A.I.O. It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and take seriously any problems which may lead to non-attendance.

Possible problems which may lead to non-attendance are:

- Parentally condoned unjustified absence.
- Pupil disaffection
- Bullying
- Inappropriate curriculum for a child
- Unrecognised SEN difficulties
- Burdens of domestic responsibilities
- Abuse or neglect
The school will reinforce its responsibility by taking every opportunity to relay this policy in communications to parents. Regular items in the newsletter, parents evenings and both formal and informal meetings with individual parents will be used as vehicles for communication. The prospectus will set out school expectations and requirements as regards attendance and punctuality.

**Responsibility of Parents**

Under section 36 of the Education Act 1944 parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education. In most cases children attend school. Thus parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children attend and stay at school.

However, parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular attendance at school. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. In addition they should regard themselves as partners with the school in the education of their children. This means instilling in their children a respect for education and those who deliver it. Parents should impress upon their children the need to observe the schools’ code of conduct and reinforce this through discipline at home.

Parents or Carers should inform the school as soon as possible of the reason for a child’s absence and provide any further information that may be required. This may take the form of a note to school, a phone call, text message, email or personal contact. Where no contact is made, Admin will phone contact numbers on a daily basis to obtain reasons for absence. If no contact is made to parents then Admin staff will request from the child a letter of absence. If no response is received the Learning Mentor will contact the parent. If acceptable reasons for absence are not provided then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

A key action list is compiled every six weeks by the Attendance Officer (LA) and the Learning Mentor. Poor attendance is categorised using 5 Stages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>School Monitoring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>School Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Assessment visit and letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Case work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Statutory Action</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Parents are contacted, informed of their child’s stage and offered support. Attendance of such groups is closely monitored and appropriate action taken.

**Punctuality**

If a child is late more than once in the week they will be contacted by the Learning Mentor and offered support. If punctuality does not improve parents/carers will be asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher and Learning Mentor to discuss the issue.
MARKING THE REGISTER

Each register must be marked at the beginning of the morning session 8.55 - 9.05 and in the 10 minutes after the afternoon session commences.

Registers must be marked in such a way that brackets are joined by a black Berol fine felt tip pen, which should be kept in a safe accessible place on the Teachers’ table.

Registers will be collected by 9.30am and 1.30pm.

In the event of a fire whilst the register is still in the Teachers’ possession the teacher should take the register with them to the fire assembly point.

Known lateness is recorded by marking both P and A

DO NOT LEAVE ANY PUPIL’S MARKS BLANK WHEN SENDING THE REGISTER TO THE OFFICE. Dots will not suffice! If a pupil has not arrived in school mark them absent. As soon as the reason for absence becomes known the relevant mark can be inserted at the first available opportunity.