

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS.

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S. Wade Education Director

E. Mousley Headteacher

J. Heyhoe-Kirkbride Pastoral Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead

This policy outlines the shared responsibility between the school, pupils, parents, and the broader community in promoting regular attendance. The goal is to ensure that every pupil reaches their full potential through consistent and punctual attendance, fostering a supportive and collaborative approach to addressing attendance challenges. This policy should be read in line with the attendance section in the Safeguarding Policy. In developing and implementing this policy, the school has considered its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The person with overall responsibility for this policy, including the monitoring and promotion of attendance is Julie Heyhoe in their role as Pastoral Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead. They can be contacted at julie.heyhoe@edenhurst.co.uk

Rationale

Regular attendance is essential for pupils' academic achievement and social development. This policy promotes a culture of high expectations where attendance is prioritised and supported by the entire school community.

Principles

- **Shared Responsibility:** Attendance improvement requires collaboration between the school, pupils, parents/guardians, and external partners.
- **Positive School Environment:** The school will provide a welcoming and engaging environment that motivates pupils to attend regularly.
- **Clear Communication:** Open and transparent communication between the school, parents, and pupils about attendance expectations and procedures.
- **Early Intervention:** Timely identification and intervention for pupils at risk of poor attendance to prevent long-term absence.

Roles and Responsibilities

School's Responsibilities

- Promote Attendance: The school will actively promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through assemblies, newsletters, and meetings with families, this is also outlined in the Parent/pupil Handbook.
- Monitoring: Attendance will be recorded twice daily, and regular reviews will be conducted to identify patterns of absence.
- Intervention: Early intervention strategies will be employed for pupils with declining attendance. These may include letters home, parent meetings, and individualised support plans.
- Support for Families: The school will offer guidance and support to families facing barriers to regular attendance, including pastoral care, counselling, and referral to external agencies if necessary.
- Recognition of Good Attendance: Positive reinforcement will be used to reward excellent and improved attendance.

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities

- Ensure Regular Attendance: Parents/guardians are expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Report Absences: Notify the school on the first day of an absence and provide a reason. For extended absences further information will be needed, including medical information
- Engagement: Work collaboratively with the school if attendance issues arise and attend meetings when required.
- Avoid Term-Time Holidays: Family vacations should be scheduled during school holidays. Requests for term-time absences will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Requesting a leave of absence - Parents are required to complete a form which is passed to the Headteacher for approval. The school office record how much time the pupils have been absent on the form during the school year. A copy of the form is sent home with attendance details completed. Parents are requested to liaise with the class teacher regarding work that will be missed.

Pupils' Responsibilities

- Attendance: Attend school regularly, arrive on time, and be prepared for learning.
- Engage with Support: If facing challenges affecting attendance, pupils should seek support from teachers, Pastoral Lead or DSL.
- Positive Attitude: Contribute to a positive school culture that values regular attendance.

Attendance Procedures

Daily Attendance Monitoring

- Recording: Teachers will take attendance daily. All absences will be recorded, categorised as either authorised (with a valid reason, such as illness) or unauthorised (without a valid reason). Within this codes for attendance and absence are listed in p76-92 of [Working Together to Improve School Attendance August 2024](#)
- The school day is between 8.45am and 3.30pm (Pre-Prep)/ 4.00pm (Prep). In the morning the register will close at 9am.
- Late Arrival: pupils arriving after the official start time will be marked late and required to sign in at reception.

Reporting Absences

- Parents/guardians must report their child's absence on the first day by phone or email, explaining the reason for the absence. If the school is not notified, the absence will be followed up promptly by the school.
- Parents/guardians should contact the school office on 01782 619348 or via office@edenhurst.co.uk for day to day matters.
- If Parents/guardians have wider concerns about attendance they should contact
 - The form tutor
 - The Head of Pre-Prep/ Prep
 - Julie Heyhoe, as the person with overall responsibility for attendance

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

- Authorised Absences: Illness, medical appointments, family emergencies.
- Unauthorised Absences: Holidays during term time, unexplained absences, or absences for reasons not accepted by the school.

Addressing Attendance

Early Intervention

95%-90% Attendance: When a pupil's attendance falls between 95%-90%, parents will be advised of attendance issues, either by email or invited in for a meeting.

Persistent Absence

If a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, they will be classified as a "persistent absentee." The school will initiate a formal process.

Escalation

In cases where attendance does not improve despite intervention, the school may consider further action, including the involvement of external agencies. This may include formal arrangements with the Local Authority where attendance issues are severe and impacting on the pupils welfare and education needs.

Recognition

The school will promote the importance of high levels of attendance amongst its community.

Working with External Agencies

The school will collaborate with external agencies, including educational welfare services, healthcare professionals, and SSCB to address the underlying issues that may affect a pupil's attendance.

Leave of absence request form and guidance notes (see appendix 1)

Appendix 1

Request for Leave of Absence During Term Time

Date that the request is being submitted:	
Leave of Absence from School During Term Time	
Child/Children (full names):	
Class/Forms:	
For the period:	From (date):
	To (date):
	Return to school (date):
The circumstances and reason for this request are:	
Signed by Parent:	
Printed Name of Parent:	

For Office Use Only:		
Current attendance (%):		
Number of school days taken as leave during term time this academic year:		
Request for leave is agreed / not agreed for the above pupil(s) to take leave during term time between the dates stated above:		
Signed (Headteacher):	Date:	Educational absence code (for register):
Notification of Decision		
Date letter / email sent to parents as notification of decision:		

Guidance Notes for Parents Requesting Leave In Term Time

1. Parents who want the School to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, complete the attached form and hand it to the School Office or Headteacher.
2. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered *well before* the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the School's decision regarding their request. Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
3. The Department for Education makes it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*. Headteachers now also determine the number of school days a pupil can be away from school if the leave is granted.
4. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
5. Edenhurst Preparatory School understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays, particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospectus, they should be in school during term time.
6. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of:
 - a) the exceptional circumstances stated that have given rise to the request;
 - b) the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
 - c) frequency of similar requests;
 - d) whether the parent made the request in advance;
 - e) pupils in examination preparation will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
7. Should the School decide to grant leave of absence, but the pupil does not return to school at the time they were expected to (ie. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. Should the School decide not to grant leave of absence and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
9. The School will continue to monitor all school absences during term time, challenging parents who ignore the procedures.