



## **Policy statement**

Edward Heneage Primary Academy is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome, which will allow them to maximise their potential.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is therefore absolutely essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the DFE.

Each year the school will examine its' attendance figures and the Governors will set attendance targets.

## **Attendance Targets**

Every school is required to set an attendance target. Each year the school will examine our attendance figures and review systems for improving attendance to ensure that we are achieving our set goals. These will reflect both the national and local attendance targets. As part of this process School will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving the targets set.

This year our attendance target is **96%**

Our lateness target is **0.7%**

***Lateness is not tolerated and new procedures are being implemented to address current situation***

## **School Procedures**

Class teachers will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the beginning of the afternoon session. On each occasion the teacher will record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity.



Only the Principal or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Class teachers will welcome children back on their return to school

### **Categorisation of Absence**

Any pupil who is on roll but not present at school must be recorded within one of these categories.

- Unauthorised absence
- Authorised absence
- Approved educational activity/other approved absence

#### **Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. Unauthorised absences include shopping, parents/siblings unwell, birthdays, leave of absence not authorised by school, illness not supported by medical evidence and getting up late.

#### **Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Authorised absences include illness, medical appointments (not possible to take out of school time) and religious holidays.

#### **Approved Educational Activity**

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in a supervised educational activity which meets the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This covers types of educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

### **First day of absence**

On the morning of the first day of a pupil's absence, their parents are expected to telephone the school office before 9:30am to inform staff of the reason for absence, parents must also give a date by which they believe their child will be back in school.

If a child is marked as absent on the register at the close of morning registration the absence will be recorded as no reason yet provided and the Academies Attendance Officer will contact the child's parent in order to ascertain the reason for the absence.

If a pupil is absent due to an early hospital or other medical appointment their parent should provide school with a copy of the letter of appointment or appointment card prior to the absence.

Information gathered from this telephone conversation is used to inform the register with the appropriate coding.

After any absence parents/carers must provide a signed and dated note which states the reason for the child's absence. This will be kept by the attendance officer.



**All absences will be recorded as unauthorised until a reason is provided.**

If the Attendance Officer cannot contact the child's parents a text will be sent or the Principal may ask the Attendance Officer to carry out a home visit to ascertain the reason for absence. **If contact still cannot be made then the Principal may contact social services and the Police may undertake a 'Safe and Well check.**

Pupils who are absent and the school considers them to be vulnerable children have been identified on a **First Day Response** procedure, which involves the Attendance Officer contacting home immediately following the closure of the register at 9.00am. A child is identified as vulnerable in any of the following categories: LAC, on the Child Protection Register, Child in Need, CAF known truant, attendance below 90%, parental request, school nurse involvement, EWO involvement, or as identified by SLT as in need of follow up. If contact cannot be made then the Principal must be informed immediately. This process is repeated daily until the return of the pupil to school. Please see Appendix 2 for the Academies for day absence procedures.

### **Continuing absence**

Parents should contact the school and inform the Attendance Officer if their child will be unable to return to school on the expected date. If parents do not contact school and the child does not return to school on their expected return date then the First day absence procedure should be followed or the Education Welfare Officer requested to make a home visit (appendix 2).

### **If a child is absent for ten days without contact**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation *following checks by the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer* for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

### **Frequent absence**

Attendance levels are closely monitored and reported to the Governing Body by the Principal.

It is the responsibility of class teachers and the Attendance Officer to be aware of and bring to the Principal's attention, any emerging attendance concerns.

The Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer will carry out an attendance analysis on a weekly basis and the parents of children who are absent 3 times in a 3 week period or less will be contacted by the Attendance Officer. *Appropriate further action will be discussed and implemented.* See attendance procedure, Appendix 3

The Senior Leadership Team will analyse attendance data to track the attendance of vulnerable groups of pupils ie SEN, ethnic minority, Looked after Children, children on the Child Protection register and children in receipt of Pupil Premium.



Pupils returning to school following a period of absence will be made to feel welcome. This will include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

### **Persistent absence**

Children identified as Persistent Absentees (those with an authorised or unauthorised attendance of 90% or less) will be highlighted through attendance data analysis, carried out by the Attendance Officer.

The parents of Persistent Absentees will be contacted and action to improve attendance will be agreed, with the support of the Education Welfare Officer. See appendix 3

This information will be entered onto the school's Persistent Pupil Absence Record.

Parents will be advised of their duty to ensure that their children attend school and the consequences of persistent unauthorised absence.

### **Lateness**

Lateness is monitored closely.

- **Morning registration is at 8:45am**
- **Afternoon registration is at 1.00 pm**

Any child arriving after 8:45am but before 9.30am (morning registration) or arriving after 1pm but before 1.40pm (afternoon registration) is recorded as late.

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence.

In cases where school has been provided with a reason for lateness, such as an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate attendance code will be entered.

All children arriving after registration (for whatever reason) must report to the school office and parents/carers are requested to provide a reason.

If a child is late on more than 3 occasions in a 3 week period, the Attendance Officer will request a meeting with the child's parents to discuss the issue and offer support. The Lateness procedure will then be followed (see appendix 1)

Parents are encouraged to contact school to discuss any reasons affecting their child's punctuality.

Where a child is persistently late after the register has closed, the same procedure as for irregular attendance will be adopted.

*Late checks will be undertaken on a random basis at the school gate or reception by the Attendance Officer or Education Welfare Officer.*



## **Absence notes**

Only the Principal has the authority to *determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised, even if a note has been provided eg if the Principal believes a child was absent for longer than required and only a medical appointment card has been provided, or to buy new school shoes would be deemed as unauthorised.*

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year.

If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may be retained for a longer period.

In cases of regular absence through illness, parents may be requested to provide medical evidence (a hospital letter of appointment card, prescribed medication or contact with the School Nurse).

## **Holidays in term time/ leave of absence**

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 removed references to family holiday and prevented Principal's from granting leave of absence other than in exceptional circumstances. This means therefore that as an Academy we will not be able to authorise any requests for family holidays from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015. However, we would ask that should you intend to take your child out of school, a Leave of Absence form (appendix 4) will still need to be completed at least 4 weeks prior to the period of absence. Once you have submitted the Leave of Absence form you will receive a slip from the Academy within 1 week acknowledging your child's absence from school.

If you believe your request for leave is of an exceptional nature, this will be reviewed by the Principal.

Only the Principal (or a senior member of staff nominated by them) may authorise leave of absence and will take into consideration the attendance record of the child for whom permission for absence is sought.

**If leave of absence is taken which has not been authorised by school this may result in a penalty notice being issued which is £60 if paid within the first 21 days following the date the penalty notice was issued rising to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If a penalty notice remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.**

*If it is believed you are on holiday and have not submitted a request or an alternative reason has provided, the Attendance Officer/ Education Welfare Officer may be requested to visit your home to confirm the reason for absence.*



### **School closure**

In the event of an emergency closure, preventing pupils from accessing 380 sessions per year, the Principal will document the reason for closure and the reason why additional sessions were not available throughout the rest of the year.

### **Long term and chronic absence**

We are keen to ensure that children with severe medical conditions receive a full education and can access and enjoy the same opportunities as any other child.

For children experiencing a long period of authorised absence, a plan will be prepared in consultation with the parent/carer and relevant professional which focuses on the individual needs of the child. This may include teaching being delivered in a non-school environment.

A reintegration plan will be devised and implemented for children returning to school who have been absent for long periods.

### **Removing pupils from the school roll**

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Pupils *will* not be deleted from the school roll without authorisation from the Principal or other designated person. School is permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll only under certain circumstances as defined in **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**.

If a child is absent and the school is unaware of their whereabouts, the child will remain on the school roll and the Education Welfare Officer will be informed. If the child has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 4 weeks and both the Principal and the Local Authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil.

*The Child has ceased to attend school and the Principal has received confirmation that they have been registered at another school.*

*The Principal has received written confirmation from the parent that the pupil is being home educated;*

The pupil has not returned to school within ten days following the expiry of an agreed extended leave of absence and the Principal has established that the pupil's absence is not because of sickness or any unavoidable cause.

*Parents are requested to inform school as soon as they are aware they are moving home or changing school.*

Once a parent has informed the school that their child will be leaving the school, and the new school has confirmed the start date, the child is removed from the school roll by completing a 'Date of leaving/reason/destination of new school' form and their Common Transfer File (CTF) is forwarded to their new school.



If the new school is unknown, the Education Welfare Officer is informed and the CTF is loaded onto the CTF lost pupil database (S2S website), where it will wait for the next school to access.

In the event of the death of a child, their name is removed from the roll by completing a 'Date of leaving/reason/destination of new school' form, indicating 'deceased' and the Local Authority is informed.

*Whenever a pupil is deleted from roll, school has a statutory duty to upload specific information (as described in the **Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005**) to the Department for Education (DFE) School-to-School (S2S) database.*

### **Admissions register**

When a child is enrolled onto the school roll, personal information is obtained from the child's parent / guardian and entered onto the computer Admission Register. The child is given a start date by the school and their attendance is recorded from that date, not from the time that they actually begin to attend the school.

The Admissions Register includes:

Full name and address of everyone with parental responsibility, parent of residence, home address, contact details, emergency contact details, child's birth name (this is verified through scrutiny of the birth certificate, although a copy of this is not taken), child's gender, date of birth, details of the child's last school.

Parents are requested to inform school of any change in contact details.

### **The Attendance registration system**

The school uses a SIMS computer system for keeping the school attendance records. Registers are completed by class teachers during the registration period. At close of registration, the registers are saved onto SIMS by the class teacher. Information gained regarding pupil absence is used by class teachers in completing the coding for absences. Any alterations made to registers are done by the Attendance Officer.

Registers are issued to teachers in the event of a school evacuation.

All registers are filed and kept in the school office. The computer files are stored on a main server. All registers are kept for at least three years.

### **Monitoring attendance**

Attendance targets will be reviewed and set on an annual basis

The Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer will carry out an attendance analysis on a weekly basis and agree what action should be taken where a pupil's attendance is becoming a concern.

The Senior Leadership Team will analyse attendance data to track the attendance of vulnerable groups of pupils ie SEN, ethnic minority, Looked After Children, children on the Child Protection register and children in receipt of Pupil Premium and review systems to ensure target are met.



Governors will examine our attendance figures and review systems for improving attendance to ensure that we are achieving our set goals. These will reflect both the national and local attendance targets.

School will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving the targets set.

### **Promoting attendance**

Throughout the year parents/carers and governors will be kept informed of school's expectations regarding school attendance. The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, of their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The school will employ a range of reward strategies to encourage good attendance.

### **Sanctions**

Where attempts to improve a child's attendance has failed, consideration will be given to enforcing attendance through the use of penalty notices, parenting orders, Education Supervision Orders, School Attendance Orders or prosecution under section 444(1) or section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996.

All practices will be reviewed annually.

**The policy will next be reviewed by Governors in September 2016.**