



# Eyres Monsell Primary School Attendance Policy

Adopted / Reviewed	Date
Adopted	Jan 2013
Reviewed	Sept 2013
Updated	Sept 2017
Updated	Sept 2018
Updated	Sept 2019

## **Rationale:**

Children are expected to attend school for 190 days each academic year. The Staff and Governors have planned the whole curriculum over those 190 days with the aim of raising children's achievement and levels of attainment. We want the best for all children and as such we value attendance and punctuality highly. The school has an attendance officer who will be working with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), staff, governors, pupils and their families to monitor, consolidate and improve the school's attendance and pupil punctuality.

## **Punctuality**

Children can only learn if they are at school and on time, and being punctual is a vital life skill. Therefore, punctuality is very important. The school opens to parents and pupils at 8.40 a.m. so that parents in Key Stage 1 can help settle their children in the classrooms for 10 minutes, and children in Key Stage 2 can tackle early morning work. Foundation Stage opens at 8.45 a.m.

Parents / children who are late (after the class has gone into school) must sign in using the signing-in system located in the foyer of the Reception. This will help the attendance officer identify persistent lateness and help the school work with parents and the Education Welfare Service to find a suitable solution to ensure children arrive on time.

Late arrivals will be monitored and letters will be sent to those who are persistently late. If there is no improvement then a meeting between the parent and the school will be held. If after this there is still no improvement then the Education Welfare Officer will be informed and a more formal meeting held.

The school closes its register at 9.00 a.m. This allows a minimum of 15 minutes (for Foundation children) and a maximum of 20 minutes (for Key Stage 2) for children to be in their classes. Any arrivals after this time would be regarded as a late.

## **Attendance**

The school monitors the attendance of all pupils and any child whose attendance is below 90% is scrutinised more rigorously. The Educational Welfare Officer meets with the attendance officer on a regular basis to discuss how best to support parents whose children are not attending regularly enough. This may involve informal meetings, letters, home visits or formal attendance panel meetings. In extreme cases the Education Welfare Service may choose to take legal action against persistent offenders. The school will authorise and unauthorise attendance in line with the Local Authority's guidance.

## Holidays in Term Time / Leave of Absence

No holiday leave is permitted in term time for any pupil in line with the Government Guidelines, unless the Head teacher deems it is an 'exceptional circumstance'. Exceptional requests are those which are considered to meet the criteria of being: **rare, short, unavoidable and significant**. Holidays not meeting these requirements will not be classed as exceptional.

In line with Government guidelines, prior agreement must be given by the school for any term time leave of absence. Holidays will not be authorised without prior consent from the school.

All holiday requests are looked at on an individual basis, where attendance, unauthorised absence and previous holidays are considered in the decision. It is the EWS (Education Welfare Service) who will decide whether a PN will be issued based on this criteria. If a pupil is taken on holiday or on leave of absence without prior agreement, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and the matter will immediately be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This will result in a Penalty Notice and fine being issued to the parent. The fine is £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice and £120 per child, per parent if paid within 28 days.

## Rewards and incentives

The school is keen to encourage children to regularly attend school and the school rewards positive school attendance.

## Individual Attendance

Children's attendance is monitored each half term on a cumulative basis. Where a child has an attendance of **96% of higher for the half term**, they receive an attendance reward. These rewards change each half term and may take the form of a prize or an additional event to celebrate the pupils' regular attendance. Pupil voice is sought to provide activities and events which the children are excited and engaged in. Parents will be notified if their child has achieved 96% or above and are eligible to receive a reward or attend an attendance reward event.

Children with attendance below 96% are not eligible to receive or attend these rewards / events.

In providing half termly rewards, this allows children the opportunity to potentially access up to 6 opportunities across the year to gain recognition and reward for attendance. It also allows recognition for improved attendance, acknowledging that a child may have a period of absence one half term, but not in subsequent ones. Thus the school believes this is a way to celebrate the positive and regular attendance of as many children as possible.

Where children have an attendance of 100% at the end of each term, they will receive a 100% attendance certificate.

Children with attendance of 100% for the whole year will receive an additional incentive / reward at the end of the Summer Term.

## Class Attendance

In addition to individual rewards and incentives, we also offer a class attendance system of reward. Every week, classes with a combined attendance of 96% or higher, receive a certificate.

The class who has the highest attendance in the school each week, receives a "class cheque" for £5. If a class receives 100% attendance for the week, they receive a "class cheque" for £10.

As a class, children decide whether they bank their cheques, to build up the amount or they can choose to spend them at any time, up to the limit that they have accrued. This again provides pupil voice in the rewards that they receive and a sense of class and team building in working together to agree rewards.

## Equalities

In line with our equalities policy, the school reserves the right to assess on an individual basis where exceptional adjustments may be required for the half termly rewards, should a child's educational life and subsequent attendance be affected for longer than an academic year. These may include consideration for:

- where a child has a life-long or long term medical condition
- children under child protection arrangements

## Absences

To help parents realise the importance of children attending school and to ensure children are not truanting the school operates a 'first response phone call' policy. The attendance officer will telephone the parents of any child who is marked as absent on the class registers whose parents have not contacted the school to inform them of the child's absence and reason. This will also help address the number of unauthorised absences – where no reason has been supplied. If the Attendance Officer doesn't get a response when they telephone the parents our Parent Link Worker will make a Home Visit.

Parents may send in a letter or telephone the school office to inform the school of their child's absence and the reason for this. The head teacher will authorise the absence where they feel it is a genuine reason. However, if there appears to be a trend or a lot of absences the head teacher may, with advice from the Education Welfare Service, decide not to authorise future absences and look at supporting the family.

**Medical** appointments should be made for either before or after the school day. On rare occasions and if this is not possible, medical appointment letters/appointment cards need to be brought to the office where the details can be entered onto their school records. Children should also be brought to school and collected just before the appointment and returned to school as soon as possible after the appointment.

If parents have medical appointments for themselves, then they should ensure that alternative arrangements are made for their children to be either brought to or collected from school.