



Attendance Policy

March 2022

Introduction

At Elsley Primary School, we aim to ensure that all pupils attend school every day and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Good attendance at school is not just beneficial but essential in enabling pupils to reach their full educational achievement. Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%. Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- **Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence**
- **Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled**
- **Acting early to address patterns of absence**

Legal Requirements

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff responsible for monitoring attendance are:

- Raphael Moss (Head Teacher)
- Kaniz Mulji (Inclusion Lead)
- Irene Mitchell (Attendance Officer)
- Susan Elsayy-Butt (Family Support Worker)
- Andrea Broderick (Local Authority Attendance Officer)

Responsibilities of classroom staff

- Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately and on time.
- Promote and reward good attendance with pupils.
- Liaise with appropriate colleagues on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a pupil's absence.
- Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of pupils

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time and go straight to class
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk or welfare officer if they are late
- Take the late slip to class and give it to the class teacher so that they can be registered as late on SIMS.



Responsibilities of parents/carers

- inform the school on the first day of absence and subsequent days of absence
- discuss in advance any planned absences
- support the school in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- not let pupils take time off for minor ailments
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- building a routine that promotes good punctuality and attendance

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Working with the Local Authority

Elsley Primary School works with the Education Welfare Service to help improve the attendance of all our pupils. The Attendance Officer liaises with our link Education Welfare Officer (EWO) frequently to monitor and review progress. Our Education Welfare Officer visits the school on a regular basis to advise the Attendance Officer on managing absences, making appropriate referrals and to meet with parents.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

As a school we will:

- Give parents details on attendance in our newsletters and school website
- Report to parent/carers half-termly regarding their child's attendance and punctuality
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual class achievements and awarding class trophies
- Incentivise good or improved attendance through rewards
- Run events such as 'Early Bird Week' to raise attendance levels

Recording Attendance and Punctuality

Legally the register must be taken twice a day. This is done at the start of the day at 8.55am and again in the afternoon when pupils return from lunch : Early Years by 12:35pm, Year 1 and Year 2 by 12:50pm, Year 3 by 1:15pm and Years 4, 5 and 6 by 1:40pm.

If a pupil is absent, the parent/carer must contact the office, by making a telephone call 0208 902 8003 or emailing absence@elsley.brent.sch.uk .every day the pupil is absent, stating the reason for absence.

The morning register is taken at 8.55am and any pupil arriving after this time must enter the school via the main office. In accordance with the DfE's regulations and guidance, if a pupil arrives after that time they will receive an 'L' mark that shows them to be late. Upon arrival and registering in the office, they are given a red 'late slip' to hand to their teacher in class so the teacher knows they have been registered. After 9.15am a child will receive a 'U' mark for arriving after the registers have closed and this shows as an unauthorised absence for the morning session. This may mean that the pupil's parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Parents/carers will be contacted by the school if their child is regularly late. If punctuality continues to be a concern the Attendance Officer or Family Support Worker will meet with parents to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved.



Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school will be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised based on the information about the reason for absence. This information should be provided on the first morning of the pupil being absent. It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school but the government has produced some simple guidelines.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like:

- Illness (not minor ailments)
- Medical (hospital appointments which unavoidably fall in school time)
- Emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" will be given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (celebrating birthdays etc.)
- Absences which have not been adequately explained
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

These types of absence can lead to Brent Council using sanctions and/or legal proceedings against parents/carers.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

No pupil may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Service. If no reason has been given for a pupil's absence after 3 days and the school have not been able to contact parents/carers, a referral will be made to the local authority education welfare team.

Moving School

If a pupil is moving out of the area, to a new school or being home schooled, parents/carers must inform the school in advance.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

Leave of Absence

From September 2013 the Department for Education amended the Pupil Registration Regulations. The amendments make clear that Head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There are many situations which could constitute exceptional circumstances. At Elsley, we interpret 'exceptional' in this context as being unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the pupil, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. The Headteacher will consider each case on an individual basis (looking at past requests, attendance and attainment). Most requests will be refused based on the fact that there is 13 weeks holiday a year.

Only 1 day is permitted for religious observance.



Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and we may refer parent/carers to Brent Council's Education Welfare Service and parent/carers may receive a Formal Warning, Education Penalty Notice or be prosecuted in court.

If requesting term time leave, a form must be completed in advance. Forms are available from the school office or on the school website. It should not be assumed that the request will be granted and flights should not be booked prior to receiving a reply from the head teacher.

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Review date: March 2023