



Attendance Policy

June 2025

Introduction

'Everyday counts'

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. 'Everyday counts' 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 aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance in line with Department for Education (DfE) Statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (from 19 August 2024), and school attendance parental responsibility measures.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of the Education Act 1996

Part 2 of the Education Act 2002

Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notice) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

School census guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)



Roles and Responsibilities

Staff responsible for monitoring attendance are:

- Raphael Moss (Head Teacher)
- Kaniz Mulji (Deputy Headteacher Inclusion Lead and attendance team member)
- Sharine Tyndale (Assistant Headteacher, Designated safeguard Lead and attendance leader)
- Irene Mitchell (Attendance Officer)
- Susan Elsayy-Butt (Family Support Worker Deputy safeguard lead and attendance team member)
- Jerome Clarke (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 and receiving a late slip 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

- Ensure your child attends school regularly. Absence should only happen when your child is significantly ill, there should be a symptom, feeling 'unwell' is not enough.
- Telephone, email the school on the first morning by 8.30am and each subsequent morning of absence unless the school attendance officer advises otherwise, informing us of the reason for absence; 'ill/unwell' is not sufficient.
- Make all non-emergency medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays. Provide evidence of these appointments and notify the school not less than 24 hours in advance.
- Provide medical evidence after the 2nd day of absence where the illness/absence is frequent or prolonged.
- Ensure we have your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, childminders and emergency contact details.
- only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- building a routine that promotes good punctuality and attendance

Reporting an Absence

All absences must be reported to the school office by 8.30am on each morning of your child's absence.

This can be done by email on absence@elsley.brent.sch.uk

Telephone call on: 02089028003

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 and a safeguarding concern.



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

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. After 9.15am a child will receive a 'U' mark for arriving after the registers have closed. 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)

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Where a child is marked absent and no reason has been provided the school will:

- Check that the child has not arrived late.
- Contact the parents/carers to ascertain the reason.



- If parent/carer cannot be contacted, notify the headteacher and safeguarding lead.
- Contact the educational social worker if the child has already been referred to the local authority.
- As part of the school's safeguarding procedures, if a child has not attended, without any parental contact or any other satisfactory information for the absence, then by the third day of unexplained absence the school will collaborate with Brent Council's School Attendance Officer to identify the pupil's whereabouts. The pupil will remain on roll during this process and parents will be contacted at their last known address to advise that their child's school place is at risk.

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.
 - Waiting for a delivery
 - Parent's illness (other than in an emergency)

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 school sessions across the school year for whatever reason.

When attendance becomes a concern, the school will:

- In the first instance the school will send 'A attendance warning letters' via email/post to all pupils whose attendance drops below 90%. If attendance does not improve and continues to drop below 90% we will invite parents in for a supportive meeting with a member of the attendance team and the year group leader to develop a support agreement which will be monitored for 4 weeks.
- If the attendance does not improve over a monitoring period, we will make an immediate referral to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer to highlight the child's attendance concerns.
- We will make reasonable enquiries which may include home visits.

Persistent Absence (PA)

Once a child's attendance falls to 90% or below for whatever reason, they are automatically defined by the Department for Education (DfE), irrespective of the reason for absence as a Persistent Absentee. Persistent absence is a serious problem for pupils. Much of the work they miss when they are off school is never made up; these gaps in their learning leave children at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career.



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.

Legal Sanctions

The headteacher (or a member of the attendance team, local authority or the police can fine parents for unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

The school will check with the local authority before issuing a penalty notice.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- *Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- *Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.
- *Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- *Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.
- *Each parent/carer who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually addressed to the parent/carer who allowed the absence.

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Review date: December 2026