

# **ELLERAY PARK SCHOOL**

## **POLICY & PRACTICE**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**



**This Attendance Policy forms an essential element of our safeguarding policies and procedures. In implementing this policy, staff must recognise the links between the Attendance Policy and other school policies and arrangements, including the Safeguarding /Child Protection Policy, Concerns and Whistleblowing Policy.**

**2019-2020**

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

Elleray Park is recognised as an Outstanding School and this has been achieved through working with parents in striving for excellence for our children. Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil's education and it is important that all parents strive for their child to have 100% attendance.

## AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To promote regular attendance thus offering all pupils equal access to learning.
- To support our pupils and parents/ carers in establishing and maintaining the highest levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To meet the Government attendance targets set for us.
- To create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers.
- To ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days.

## WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE is so IMPORTANT

The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient full time education by regular attendance at school. Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff, all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved. There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.

Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised.

Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

It is important that parents and carers try not to keep their child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold. The school has a full time school nurse and if a child's ailments become worse the school will immediately inform parents/ carers.

The following table illustrates percentage attendance over a school year and the equivalent days/ weeks of learning missed:

Attendance During One School	Equals Days Absence...	Which Is Approximately Weeks Absent...
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks
70%	57 Days	11.5 Weeks
65%	67 Days	13.5 Weeks

## Elleray Park School Attendance Expectations

### SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the FSO (Family Support Officer) and support their work with pupils as necessary.
- To report to the Government on attendance twice a year.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance

### PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To have children in School ready for teaching by the start of the day at 9.00 a.m.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible.
- To make applications for leave in writing on the school's '**Leave Of Absence Form**' , giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school and FSO to improve lateness and attendance.
- Where possible, to avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.
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If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

## **ABSENCES DURING TERM TIME**

### **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact the school on **0151 639 3594 for Wallasey** or **0151 271 3599 for Pensby** and speak to the school office as soon as possible on the first day of absence. Alternatively, absences can be reported on the 'app', using Parent App Connect, giving an explanation/reason for absence and an estimated date of return. Class Dojos and transport escorts should only be informed of absences as a secondary source of communication.
- If possible, contact the transport section to inform them that collection won't be needed. Please remember to ring again to re-instate the transport arrangements when the child is ready to return to school.

### **If your child is absent we will :**

- Contact you via telephone or via a Parent App message if we have not heard from you on the first day of absence. If we cannot contact you we may carry out a Home Visit.
- We will telephone or text other contacts you have provided if we are unable to make contact with you. This is in light of updated safeguarding guidance.
- Your child's class teacher will have a discussion with you if attendance falls below 95%.
- The headteacher will send you a concern letter if attendance falls below 93%.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Headteacher if absence does not improve (between 90% and 95%)
- Persistent Absence with no reason provided by parent/carer may result in a request to the Education Social Welfare Service for a £60 Education Penalty Notice.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Education Social Welfare Service if the above interventions have not resulted in sustained improved attendance.

AS OF 1ST SEPTEMBER 2013, THE RATE PER CHILD WILL BE £60 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £120 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 28 DAYS

If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

Should concerns persist the Local Authority will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action. See Appendix 1.

### **Holidays and Leave of Absence During Term Time**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's progress and can have a detrimental impact upon their social relationships within school. Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in

## Different Types of Absence

The lists below are not definitive or exhaustive. The Headteacher may decide on an individual basis whether absence is authorised. The unauthorised absences given are only illustrative.

### Authorised Absences

Genuine illness of pupil  
Medical appointment for pupil  
Visit to prospective new schools  
Other educational programmes

### Unauthorised Absences

Shopping/day trip/theme park visit  
A birthday treat  
Missing transport due to oversleeping  
Looking after other children/family member  
Appointments for other family members  
Illness of other family members

## LATENESS

Children must be in class by 9.00 a.m. each day. Children will be marked late if they arrive at school after the registers have been taken. The school gates will be shut by 9 am. Children who arrive after that time must come into the building via the main office, where they will be entered as late. Lateness will be monitored and the F.S.O. (Family Support Officer) may follow this up.

## THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

The Education Welfare Officer strives to support school, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

Wirral Local Authority, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

A Fixed Penalty Notice when requested by a Headteacher can be issued as long as the following criteria apply:

- At least 10 sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence by the pupil during the current school term, or 20 sessions (ten school days) in the previous 4 months
- Other than in specific circumstances, the parent will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given 15 school days to affect improvement.
- Within the 15 day period, further unauthorised absence will trigger the issue of a notice without warning.
- No more than two Penalty Notices will be issued per pupil per academic year.

In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority reserves the right to:

- issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence
- issue a Penalty Notice without warning

## GOVERNORS

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. The schools attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body regularly.

## POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Governing Body, as part of its monitoring cycle.

## **THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER**

The Local Authority Attendance Service strives to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

Section 444 of the Education Act states that “if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence.” Wirral Local Authority, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

A Fixed Penalty Notice when requested by a Headteacher can be issued as long as the following criteria apply:

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METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL



**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE OF CHILD  
FROM SCHOOL ELLERAY PARK SCHOOL**

I, the undersigned, being the parent or carer of:

(Name of Child) .....

Address .....

Request that he/she be granted leave of absence from school

From / / to / /

I understand that leave cannot be granted for holidays in term time, apart from in exceptional circumstances. I have outlined below the reason for this request for leave.

.....  
.....  
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.....  
.....  
.....

Signature of Parent/Carer ..... Date .....

Name of Parent/Carer .....

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*Parents / carer's do NOT have an automatic right to leave of absence. Permission is only given at the Headteacher's discretion abiding by the new government legislation outlined in 2013.*

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The application for leave is / is not approved

Headteacher ..... Date .....