

EARLSMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY



SUCCESS *for ALL*

Written by	J. Stangroom S. Redmond
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Mission Statement

At Earlsmead Primary School we encourage all members of our school community to strive to be the best they can be and develop new skills that empower them for life-long learning in order to become confident, valuable members of society.

We create an inclusive, supportive, safe and challenging environment where all contributions are valued.

Learning is motivating and independence is encouraged hence all become reflective, self-learning team members with a positive sense of wellbeing and a love of learning.

Our Vision

Working in partnership with children, parents, staff and Governors as a community we will achieve *Success for All* through:

Securing resilience

Understanding values and respecting others

Committing to our learning

Community involvement

Equality for all

Striving to do our very best

Setting high expectations

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- It also refers to:
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Jacqueline Stangroom and can be contacted via 0208 864 5546.

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher, (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Jacqueline Stangroom and can be contacted via 0208 864 5546.

3.5 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office on the same day.

3.6 School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return. This can be done by phone or in person.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time at 8.45am.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 8:55am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:30pm for Reception classes, 12:40pm for Key Stage 1 and 1:30PM for Key Stage 2.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff or alternatively leaving a clear message informing us of the pupil's name, class and reason for absence on our reporting your child's absence option line (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as prescription, doctor's note or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/carers are requested to complete a Request for Leave Form which is obtainable at the school office, prior to the planned absence date.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

School monitors punctuality and lateness. Registers are taken at 8.45am and are kept open till 8.55am. Any arrivals after 8.55am need to report to the school office, parents need to provide a reason for lateness and this will be recorded as a late mark (L).

If a child arrives after 9.20am it will be recorded as an unauthorised late mark (U).

In cases where a child persistently arrives at school after the register is closed and has received 8 Unauthorised Late Marks within a period of 10 weeks in term time, an Educational Penalty Notice (EPN) from the London Borough of Harrow will be issued.

4.5 Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the LA attendance team.
- If school absence exceeds 10 days, and there is no contact from parents to explain why this is, the school should refer to the LA's Children Missing from Education team.

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, by termly RAG (Red-Amber-Green) letters.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated, before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Other valid reasons for authorized absence can be found in the School Attendance Guidance [School attendance guidance May 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/108222/school-attendance-guidance-may-2022.pdf)

5.2 Legal Sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices will be issued by the local authority, when requested by the Headteacher

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority will proceed to prosecution.

Information regarding penalty notices can be found on Harrow Council’s website [Education Penalty Notices – Harrow Council](https://www.harrow.gov.uk/education/education-penalty-notices-harrow-council)

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Weekly

- Best weekly class attendance for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 announced in Achievement assembly.
- Key Stage 1 class awarded a certificate to display on their classroom door along with looking after “Sally” the attendance bear for the week. Key Stage 2 class awarded a certificate to display on their classroom door along with displaying the attendance trophy in their class for the week.

Termly

- All children with 96%+ will receive a certificate.

- All children with 96%+ will be invited to wear non-uniform and attend a treat afternoon at the end of term. E.g. pop popcorn & movie, hot chocolate with the Headteacher or free choice afternoon (treat will be decided depending on numbers).
- Each child with 96%+ will have their name displayed on our attendance tree display.

Yearly

- All children with 100% attendance for the entire year will receive a prize or take part in a surprise treat. E.g. a trip out or activities brought in, again numbers dependent. This will again be a non-uniform day.
- Certificates will be awarded for those pupils achieving 100% for the whole year.

7. Attendance Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Harrow's Attendance Intervention Model – to be used for irregular attendance and unauthorised absences.

Phase	School actions	LA Attendance Team Services	LA Children's Services
Phase 1	<p>First day response – log of texts/calls</p> <p>1st school warning letter – after either 10 unauthorised days or attendance drops below 90%. School to set monitoring period to review attendance.</p> <p>If no improvement during monitoring period – Second school warning letter to be issued.</p> <p>EPN to be issued when threshold for unauthorised absence is met</p>	Issue EPN if required	
Phase 2	<p>Meeting / School Attendance panel with parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete CAF with parental agreement for Early Support or refer to other services - School and parents to sign attendance contract - School to inform parents about possible referral to LA pre-court panel and specify monitoring period 		MASH Team receive CAF and consider for Early Support, worker allocated
Phase 3	If no progress has happened and further unauthorised absences have occurred, school to send Pre-Court Panel referral form to LA with chronology.	Review chronology, arrange pre-court panel if appropriate.	

	School to attend pre-court panel meeting with LA.		
Phase 4		If no progress or engagement at Pre-Court Panel after monitoring period, LA to pursue court action.	

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed if guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by Jacqueline Stangroom/Pastoral Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Absence request form

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

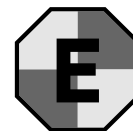
The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Earlsmead Primary School

Application for Leave of Absence for Exceptional Circumstances

Absence for medical appointments, illness, interviews and examinations, and religious observances will normally be authorised by the school. Verifying paperwork may be required.

From 22nd October 2012, no requests for holidays during term time will be authorised. Family holidays should be planned to fall in the 13 weeks when children are not at school, as all absence affects pupil progress. In *exceptional* circumstances (**not** for holidays or extended visits overseas), the Headteacher **may** authorise up to 15 days leave *at her discretion*. If you take your child out of school without permission from the Headteacher, the absence will be unauthorised. From September 2013, you may be liable to a Fixed Penalty Notice for such an absence of £60 per pupil per parent if you take your child out of school for 5 days or more without authorisation.

If, **FOR ANY REASON**, the child is not back in school on the date given to us before the absence began, without notifying the school of the reasons, the child may be taken off roll and you would have to re-apply for a school place. If you take your child out of school for more than 15 school days, they will be taken off roll.

Office @earlsmead.harrow.sch.uk

Child's name:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child from: <i>Date of first day of absence</i> to <i>Date of last day of absence</i>	
Number of school days:	
The exceptional reason why the absence is needed in term time:	
Supporting documents:	
Parent signed:	Date:
Our overall attendance target for this year is:	96.1%
Leave of absence is:	
Approved	The absence will be recorded as authorised
Not approved	The absence will be recorded as unauthorised
The reason for my decision is:	
Signed: Head teacher	Date: