

Attendance Policy

Eppleton Academy Primary School



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Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Recording attendance	5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7. Attendance monitoring	Error! Bookmark not defined.
8. Monitoring arrangements	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9. Links with other policies	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 1: attendance codes	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promote good attendance and punctuality, and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- 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 make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 96%, with a target of at least 97%,
- To support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically, achieving to their full potential.
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders establish positive life habits that are necessary for future success.

Eppleton Academy Primary acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community including pupils, parents, governors and staff.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) 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 3 of the Education Act 2002](#)
- [Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

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:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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, and/or authorizing SLT to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the headteacher where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents 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
- 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

- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the headteacher/ AHT's.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

See [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The class teacher, or identified staff member, will take an electronic register recording who is present and absent from school from 8:45am. At 8:55 am the electronic register will be saved and closed in the classroom. Any late pupils should then enter the school through the main entrance. Parents (or child if unaccompanied) will be asked for the reason for their lateness. All staff need to be aware that any child arriving late MUST register at the office for purposes of fire regulations.

A second electronic register for the afternoon session will be taken as soon as children return to class at 1pm and will be closed at 1:15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent 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, who can be contacted via telephone number (01915170006) and/or Classdojo Message.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card 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 will be notified of this.

4.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents 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 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 Late, using the appropriate code. Arrival after the close of registration with no valid reason will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded 'U' in the register. This means that, despite being in school, they will technically be marked absent for the session. It will be recorded on the register as an unauthorised absence and could result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to target the teaching of basic skills, to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.

If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.

Pupils who arrive after registration **MUST** be signed in, in accordance with the school procedures.

We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to attend a meeting in school to discuss the problem. If the lateness continues a referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Service and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued or ultimately the parent could be prosecuted.

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 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.

The school will:

- Call the pupil's parent 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 carry out a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, the police may be called to carry out a wellbeing check.
- 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on subsequent days if the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school will contact the local authority attendance team as appropriate (see section 5.2 below)

4.6 Reporting to parents

- We will report on individual attendance and punctuality termly during parent's evenings and written reports.
- We will remind parents of the importance of regular attendance in newsletters and the school website.
- We will publish our school attendance rate in newsletters and the website.

How parents can help

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

- There are obviously times when children have unplanned absences and are not able to attend school, for example due to ill health. If this is the case, please notify the school by 9:30am or as soon as practically possible by telephone. If no message is received we will make every effort to contact you.
- Arrange medical or dental appointments outside of school hours or during breaks wherever possible.
- Notify the school in advance of a medical or dental appointment by showing the appointment card / letter at the school office. The absence will be marked as unauthorised if this is not shared.
- Send in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness.
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.
- Arrange for children to take holidays during designated school closure times.
- Ensure that the school is informed of changes to contact details such as phone numbers and addresses.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- 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.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Applications for Leave of Absence, where dates can be known ahead, must be made in advance of the requested date. Consideration is given to each request before a decision is reached by the headteacher, on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration, England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its individual circumstances. Any leave of absence that has been declined or where the parents have not sought approval will be recorded as unauthorised. These cases will be referred to the Local Authority and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued to each parent for each pupil.

If you would like to request term time leave of absence you MUST put this request in writing to the headteacher Mrs Jackson. An email 'For the Attention of Mrs Jackson' should be sent to office@eppletonacademyprimary.co.uk

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill. We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (Including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments. The school will only authorise a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. If a parent rings the school to confirm the

pupil is unwell the school **may** request supporting evidence: medical appointment card, letter from a professional, doctor's note, medication prescribed by the doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other medical evidence.

- 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
- Parent(s) 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.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider essential or reasonable or for those pupils where no reason has been provided.

Unauthorised absences can include:

- Forgetting school term dates
- Oversleeping
- Absences which have not been explained
- Arriving at school after 9:30am
- Leaving school for no reason during the day
- Keeping pupils off unnecessarily without explanation
- Absences due to shopping or looking after other children
- Day trips or family outings
- Problems with uniform /clothing
- Birthdays

No authorisation will be given for any holidays taken during term time.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absences. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not itself authorise absence. It is for the school to determine if an absence is to be authorised (The Education (Pupil registration, England) Regulations, 2006)

In addition, a pupil can also be recorded as 'Approved Education Activity'. Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. This would include field trips and educational visits, sporting activities and link courses or approved education off site.

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

A parent may receive a fixed penalty notice from the local authority, the police or through the referral into the local authority from a headteacher, for the unauthorized absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If the school makes a referral for a fixed penalty notice, all necessary related documentation will be shared with the local authority including parental letters, attendance certificates and copies of school communication.

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 who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school in collaboration with the local authority, may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Providing an environment in which pupils feel welcomed and valued. The school's ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late.
- Class teachers will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that they have and can succeed.
- Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause of concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals. The school will work with parents to support regular attendance, for example communicating early about issues, acknowledging positive improvements and indicating a named contact in school.
- In our weekly celebration assembly, monitoring of class attendance is shared publicly and we use our 'Classopoly Board' to promote good attendance. All classes, who have achieved over 96%, partake in the game with a range of allocated awards depending on which square they land on.
- School will support and reward pupils with consistently good attendance. Each term, all children who have achieved 100% attendance for the term will receive a 'golden ticket' to a special celebration event. We will also acknowledge children with improved attendance with certificates in assembly. All children who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year will receive recognition in our end of year celebration assembly in the Summer Term.

7. Attendance monitoring

We will closely monitor your child's attendance and alert you if we feel that there is an issue. The school undertakes a range of measures to support pupils where attendance is an issue. Any child whose attendance is 96% or less will be closely monitored and if attendance falls below 93% the family will receive a letter of concern. If attendance continues to be a concern, further letters and meetings in school will take place in order to discuss issues and offer appropriate support and actions. Please see *Appendix 1* for our full list of attendance procedures.

If your child is experiencing difficulties you should contact the school at an early stage and work together with staff in resolving the difficulties. This is nearly always successful.

Where we fail to see an improvement in a pupils' attendance it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the pupil receives the support required and it is important that parents work with the relevant external agency in order to improve their child's attendance.

If there is no improvement in attendance. Parents will be informed that their son/daughter's attendance will be passed onto the Local Authority Attendance Service who will assess the case to determine the appropriateness of use of statutory enforcement procedures i.e. Fixed Penalty Notices, Magistrates Court or seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and / or 3 months imprisonment, a parenting order can also be imposed.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

We collect and store electronically attendance data weekly for internal purposes – for example, to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- 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:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 7.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator & designated safeguarding leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

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 recognize that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Establish a range of interventions to address barriers to attendance, including potential sources
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan or Looked After by the Local Authority

- If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or identified as a Child in Need attendance is carefully monitored and reported at Core Group Meetings.
- If a child is Cared For by the Local Authority, attendance is carefully monitored and reported at termly PEP meetings and as part of sharing of information through Welfare Call.

Children Missing in Education

Definition: A Child Missing in Education (CME) is defined as a child or young person of compulsory academy age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving full-time education suitable to their needs, e.g. age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

- they don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system
- they are removed by their parents
- behaviour and/or attendance difficulties
- they cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying
- they fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area
- the family move home regularly
- problems at home

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full time education.

If children have been absent from school for 10 consecutive days, they will be reported as 'Missing in Education' to the LA in one of the following routes:

- By emailing: ehaat@togetherforchildren.org.uk
- By telephoning 0191 561 2837.
- By completing a CME referral form. Referral form can be located <https://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/schools/children-missing-education>

We will not remove a child from roll without completing form CME1 and liaising with the local authority that this is the correct action and ensure that all children removed from the school register are, in accordance with Regulation 8(h)(iii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

APPENDIX 1

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

“Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full-time attendance at school of registered pupils”
(Education Act 1996).

At Eppleton Academy Primary we aim to work with families to promote good attendance. We therefore have the following attendance procedures in place:

1. Telephone call to parents/carers on the first day of absence by 9:30am.

This is carried out by office staff if there has been no contact/communication made by parents giving reasons for absence. If no contact can be made by telephone messages will be left and further phone calls will be made. A member of SLT will be informed of the concern. All known contacts will be called to try to determine the welfare of the children and the reason for absence.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system

If there is still no reason for absence or where we continue to be concerned we may make a ‘home visit’ or request the police to undertake a ‘Safe and well’ welfare visit.

Please note, if children are already on CP, CIN or EH plans (with involvement from Together for Children) or if there are safeguarding concerns which are being monitored then professionals will be contacted or house visits will occur on the first day of absence.

If children have been absent from school for 10 consecutive days, they will be reported as ‘Missing in Education’ to the LA.

2. Parents updated termly at parent’s nights and in pupil reports of their child’s attendance levels.
3. **STAGE 1 - Initial letter of concern/verbal discussion from senior lead.** When attendance falls below 93% or if there is persistent lateness or persistent absence.
4. **STAGE 2 - Second letter of concern.** Sent if no improvement to initial request. Parents invited in for a meeting to discuss attendance. At this point, parents may be informed that future absences will not be authorised without medical evidence (pharmacy label, doctors appointment confirmation etc.)
5. **STAGE 3 - Third letter sent to parents.** If no improvement in an agreed amount of time, a formal School Attendance Meeting with senior leads (Headteacher/AHT) will take place where an Action Plan/Parenting Contract is drawn up.
6. **Further weeks of monitoring.** Close monitoring using the Action Plan/Parenting Contract and a meeting to review.
7. **STAGE 4 - If no improvement in attendance.** Parents will be informed that their son/daughter’s attendance will be passed onto the Local Authority Attendance team who take over at this point and decisions made whether parents will be prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

Please Note:

If parent fails to attend a meeting, appropriate staff will proceed with the Action Plan/Parenting Contract and will be delivered to the child’s home by a senior lead where they will be asked to sign them.

Senior leads can visit Parents and Guardians when necessary including making unannounced visits. If attendance improves School will continue to monitor attendance.