

EAST BOLDON INFANT SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Intent:

At East Boldon Infant School our aim is to work together with parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend both regularly and punctually.

Parents' responsibilities

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis
- Parents should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as illness, they should contact the school by 9.15am on the first morning of absence. This may be done by phone, by letter, parentmail/email or in person.
- Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this, on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason, the school will record such absences as unauthorised. In some cases, this may be retrospective and authorisation may be withdrawn should circumstances arise leading the school to decide that the reason given was not truthful. If this occurs, this will be discussed with the parents.
- Parents should ensure that their child arrives on time for the start of registration (9.00am). Doors will be closed at this time and children arriving after this time should report to the school office and parents should sign the Late Book.
- Parents should avoid booking family holidays during term-time. Such holidays will not be authorised.

School responsibilities:

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's progress and personal well being.
- Registers will be taken twice daily (at 9.00am and at 1.10pm). Registers will close at 9.05am and 1.15pm. Any child arriving after the close of the registration period will be recorded as late for that session.
- Teachers will complete registers in accordance with guidance given by the Headteacher. Registers will be monitored regularly in order to ensure that they are being satisfactorily maintained and to identify any potential attendance problems at an early stage.
- Class Teachers should raise any concerns about attendance and punctuality with a senior leader/Office Manager.
- Should a child be absent, the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. Should no explanation be received, then the space will be left as an empty circle.
- The Office Manager will check the registers on collections and endeavour to make contact with the any parent who has not notified us of an absence.

- All absence notes from parents should be dated and initialled by the class teacher and returned to the office with the register, where they will be stored. Only notes regarding absences where there are concerns need to be brought to the attention of the Headteacher, who may then choose to speak to the parents.
- The Office Manager will regularly collect attendance data and use this during meetings with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify tasks and follow up actions for both the school and the Office Manager. Other agencies such as the Education Welfare Officer and Social Care may also be involved.
- East Boldon Infant School will employ a number of strategies to promote regular attendance including publishing clear attendance information in the school's prospectus and online on our website, appropriate personal encouragement for particular children, a weekly class mascot who visits the class of the highest attendance for the week, termly and annual certificates and prizes.

Persistent absentees

Government guidelines state that a child who attends school for 95% of the time is classed as having 'good' attendance.

Persistent absentees are defined as children whose attendance is below 85% and where unsatisfactory reasons are given for absence. However, as a school we monitor attendance closely and where patterns of absences are beginning to occur such as regular absences on particular days or persistent lateness, but attendance is above 85%, we will record these and monitor closely.

We endeavour to keep our parents up-to-date with their child's attendance, if it begins to fall below 90%, we will on occasions send out letters to parents to notify them of the child's attendance figure. Any particular causes for concern will be followed with an appointment with the Headteacher. We believe that a strong relationship between home and school is paramount and anything school can do to support parents with attendance is important and should happen sooner rather than later.

Appendix 1 – First day contact guidelines

First day contract is a widely used practice in schools and has been shown to improve attendance rates. The correct procedure at our school is as follows:

1. As soon as the registers are returned to the office, the Office Manager checks absentees against messages received.
2. For persistent absentees, see the relevant section above. For other pupils for whom no message has been received, staff will attempt to make contact with the parent at the earliest opportunity.
3. When contact is made the parent will be asked for the reason for absence. In the event that no proper reason is supplied, the parents will be informed that the absence will not be authorised.
4. Where no contact is made, a message should be left asking the parent to contact the school. Where it is impossible to leave a message, a note should be sent.
5. Reasons for absence are then added to the register.