



Ministry
of Defence

Attendance Policy

Episkopi Primary School

Approved by	
Date	
Review Date	September 2023
Related Policy/Guidance	<u>The Education Act 2002</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u> <u>The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</u> <u>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013</u> Policy update September 2020 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance
	Department for Education Statutory Guidance: <u>School Attendance (2019)</u> Department for Education Statutory Guidance: Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour (2013) Department for Education Advice: Behaviour and Discipline in schools (2016)

Aim

1. Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
 - a. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
 - b. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
 - c. Acting early to address patterns of absence
2. We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Every Day Counts!

Success at school starts with good attendance

Regular attendance at school is very important to a child's education. Children with good attendance enjoy school more and this has a significant impact on their learning and outcomes.

Rationale

- At Episkopi Primary School we are committed to the key messages of Everyday Counts
- Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.
- Episkopi Primary School and Early Years fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.
- Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

0 days absence = 190 days of education = 100% attendance
10 days absence = 143 days of education = 95% attendance
19 days absence = 171 days of education = 90% attendance
29 days absence = 161 days of education = 85% attendance
38 days absence = 152 days of education = 80% attendance
7 days absence = 143 days of education = 75% attendance

Keeping children safe in Education

The 2023-2024 updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) are summarised at the end [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

In short, children who are on roll and are missing education for prolonged periods are referred to as 'absent from education'. Paragraph 175 provides clarification on the difference between children missing education (CME) and children 'absent from education'.

The KCSIE update also refers to the guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance, at Episkopi Primary School we are committed to working with our partners to improve school attendance. These partners include parents, social workers, the children's and school nurse, the welfare office and the Educational Welfare Officer.

School Procedures

3. **Attendance register.** Mirroring statutory requirements for school attendance (England), our school is required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.
4. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
 - a. Present

- b. Attending an approved off-site educational activity
 - c. Absent
 - d. Authorised Absent (due to medical/dental appointments, exceptional circumstances or POL)
5. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- a. The original entry
 - b. The amended entry
 - c. The reason for the amendment
 - d. The date on which the amendment was made
 - e. The name and position of the person who made the amendment
6. Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
7. Pupils must arrive in school by **07.55** on each school day and 8.00 for FS1

The register for the first session will be taken at **[8.00]** and will be kept open until **[08.10]**. The register for the second session will be taken at **[11.15]** and will be kept open until **[11.20]**. Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance.

Unplanned Absence

8. Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by **[08.30]** or as soon as practically possible.
9. Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.
10. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
11. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide 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.
12. 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 prior to recording.

Medical or Dental Appointments

13. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

14. However, parents are encouraged 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.

15. Parents must inform the school office in advance of a medical or dental appointment with evidence such as a medical letter or appointment card.

Other Term Time Absence

16. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

Lateness and Punctuality

17. A pupil who arrives late but before registration has been taken will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

18. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

19. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil.

20. Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school late will have the absence recorded as a medical absence.

Following up Absence

21. 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.

22. Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss the issue. If lateness persists they will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues. This could be through welfare support or support provided by the EWO.

Reporting to parents

23. Parents will receive the percentages of authorised/ unauthorised absences on the end of year summer report.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

24. Head teachers (or designated deputy) may not grant leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'Exceptional circumstances' as

According to DCS School Attendance policy Directive 3.2.6 version 2.1 Apr 2020

- Bereavement or serious illness of relatives
 - Medical needs where treatment is required in UK
 - Delivery of Defence mission by service parents employed in specific roles impacting on the ability to observe standard leave patterns
- The Head and Deputy may authorise known advance absences **up to a maximum of 10 school days**, and will deal with every case on its merits.
 - We do not authorise absence for holidays during term time.
 - Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority, consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

25. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's (or designated deputy) discretion.

26. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- a. Illness and medical/dental appointments; This includes covid related illness and isolations.
- b. 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;
- c. Post Operational Leave;

27. **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

28. **Strategies for Promoting Attendance**

Maintain appropriate registration processes.

Maintain appropriate attendance data.

To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.

To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.

To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.

To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.

To work with parents to improve individual pupil's attendance and punctuality

To refer to the Unit Welfare Office/Educational Welfare Officer any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.

To report attendance statistics to DCS where requested.

All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team/ AHT -Clarissa Barber; responsible for monitoring attendance.

Promoting good attendance through our attendance leaflet

Sending out standard letters to parents regarding attendance

27 Attendance Monitoring

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Addressing and monitoring attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least **96%**.

See flow chart Annex 1 for the procedures we will follow for poor attendance

- Our office staff, have the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the Bromcom attendance software.

Step 1 Child falls under 96%

- Child highlighted and monitored. Class teacher CT contacts parent to express concerns and find ways to improve attendance

Step 2 child falls below 90%

- Previous steps monitored
- School letter 1 sent copy kept in child's file
- AHT CB to contact parents

Step 3 child still below 90%

- Child referred to EWO and welfare office. School letter 2 sent

Step 4

- If after 2 weeks no significant improvement school letter 3 sent requesting meeting between parents, HT, AHT SESW

- **Step 5**

If no sufficient improvement made after 2 weeks the HT/SESW will meet with parents to establish a written contract outlining expectations and next step

CB will inform classteacher/HT/DHT of children's attendance status and steps being taken

28 Roles and Responsibilities

The class teacher and office staff are responsible for attendance records

The office staff will make first day contact with parents

Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance

The AHT will monitor attendance weekly and report and follow up on absences

The Headteacher, AHT responsible for and championing attendance, Governors and class teachers at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

28.

Annex B Application for Term-Time Leave for Exceptional Circumstances

Name of child: _____

School/Class: _____

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term time absence from school on the grounds of 'exceptional circumstances' for the following reasons and understand that family holidays are not a valid reason and that any absence may be detrimental to my child's education.

Explanation of exceptional circumstances

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) _____ until

_____ resulting in an absence of _____ school days.

I understand that I may be required to provide evidence of the above if required and that this may require this information to be discussed with the relevant Unit Welfare Office.

Signature of parent: _____ Date: _____

I understand that permission for this exceptional term time leave from school can only be granted by my child's head teacher.

Unit Declaration confirming entitlement to apply for term-time absence in support of POL:

<u>UNIT DECLARATION</u>	
Name of Unit	_____
Rank/Name of Unit representative	_____
This is to certify that _____ is entitled to apply for term time absence from school for their child in support of post operational leave.	
Signature of Unit representative	_____ Unit Stamp

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) _____ until _____ resulting in a total absence of _____ school days.

Signature of parent: _____ Date: _____

Head teacher(designated deputy) use only:

Thank you for your application for 'exceptional leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: _____ % attendance and the number of sessions missed last term/year was _____

a) I confirm that this exceptional leave has been agreed:

Signed _____ Date _____

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed _____ Date _____

