



Edisford Primary School

*Confidence. Persistence. Getting Along. Organisation. Resilience.*

## Attendance Policy

### 1 Introduction

1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. At Edisford, we do this by encouraging both children and staff to have fun while learning. If both are having fun, we know that children are more likely to want to come to school. By building strong characteristics when children are here, they develop strong resilience to life's 'ups and downs' and, therefore, are better prepared for the next stage. They are more likely to persist.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

### 2 Definitions

#### 2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has **received notification from a parent or guardian**. This must be done as soon as possible on each day of absence, from school opening at 8.30am. For example, if a child is unwell and the parent telephones (leaving a message if necessary) or emails the bursar at school to explain the absence.
- 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

## 2.2 Unauthorised absence

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

## 3 If a child is absent

3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the parent or guardian should contact school as soon as possible on each day of absence, from when school opens at 8.30am. If we do not receive communication about an absence, we will contact the parent or guardian as soon as possible. This will usually be by 10am at the latest.

3.2 Parents may contact school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

3.3 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then immediately contact the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

## 4 Requests for leave of absence

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a family funeral. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance and the request will be carefully considered.

4.2 Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. The headteacher will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

As headteachers should only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances, parents should not assume that a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

Please review the government document: [Working together to improve school attendance.](#)

## 5 Long-term absence

5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, we will tailor our support, taking into account the diverse factors in each case.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child.

## 6 Repeated unauthorised absences

6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the child's absence falls below 90%, this is classed as persistent absence and the Senior Leadership Team will contact parents to arrange a meeting to see how best to support them.

6.2 In the case of children who display symptoms of emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), the following strategies may be used:

1. Training of staff in a non-confrontational style.
2. Consider 'soft starts' using the Breakfast Club facility.
3. Offer a safe space to be calm with a drink and a biscuit.
4. Wellbeing sessions.

6.3 The governors, supported by the LEA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

## 7 Monitoring and review

7.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it adhered to. The governors will, therefore, examine the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

7.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the annual report to the governors.

9.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardian.

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