

Eltham Hill School



Eltham Hill
SCHOOL

**KS3 & KS4 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY
POLICY**

Governors Committee: Full Governors

Date Adopted/Reviewed: July 2016

Date of next review: July 2018

For more information please call 0208 859 2843 or email
info@elthamhill.greenwich.sch.uk

Eltham Hill School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Introduction:

For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly and punctually and this policy sets out how we, together, will achieve this.

In order for any attendance and punctuality policy to be effective it must be consistently applied throughout the whole school, by its staff, pupils' and parents.

Why regular attendance is so important:

Any absence affects the pattern of your daughter's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect her learning. Any pupils' absence disrupts teaching routines which may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your daughter's regular attendance at school is your legal and parental responsibility, permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or Court action/prosecution.

Research has shown that regular attendance and good punctuality are key factors in students achieving their full potential at school. For every drop in 10% attendance there is an average drop of one grade at GCSE.

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Although being absent cannot always be helped as we all do become ill from time to time, please take a look at the table below to show you exactly what your daughter could be missing.

365 DAYS IN A YEAR	190 SCHOOL DAYS IN TOTAL	ABSENCE
100% attendance	190 days	0
95% attendance	180 days	2 weeks
90% attendance	171 days	4 weeks
85% attendance	161 days	6 weeks
80% attendance	152 days	More than half a term
75% attendance	143 days	9 + weeks

Promoting regular attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility- parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our newsletter and website;
- Report to you at least half-termly on how your daughter is performing in school , what her attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;

- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and events;
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

Safeguarding:- Effective attendance procedures are integral to ensuring all students are kept safe. Your daughter may be at risk of harm if she does not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interest of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your daughter encompasses:- Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying.

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

The Law relating to attendance:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- a. to age, ability and aptitude
- b. to any special educational needs she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping students off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained or evidenced
- student's who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips, holidays or overseas trips in term time

This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the student. If your daughter is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to

excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Absence in term time:

Holidays or overseas trip absences in term time will affect your daughter's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking students away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday/overseas trip in school time are offset by the cost to your daughter's education. Because of the damage to your daughter's learning caused by this, **we do not authorise any holidays/overseas trips in term time.**

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday/overseas trip.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral/ attendance system and we also combine this with academic support where absence affects

attainment. All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Intervention Plan and individual incentive programmes. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Attendance Advisory Officer and some cases may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice or Pre-Court Conference where a decision may be made to prosecute if a child's attendance is of a continuing concern.

Absence procedure:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact school each day of absence by 8.30am;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned school;
- Truancy Call (automated system) is issued each day to parents of students where no reason has been given to school for their daughter's absence.

What school will do if attendance is a concern:

- Letters will be sent parents to alert them to the concerns school has about their daughter's attendance and/or punctuality.
- Use Royal Borough of Greenwich's Fast Track to Improved Attendance.
- Home visits.
- Sign post pastoral support and external agencies where needed.
- Pre referral meetings and where necessary early help assessment.
- Referral to Attendance Advisory Service if your daughter's attendance is 90% and below.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your daughter by making sure we have always got up to date phone numbers.

The Attendance Advisory Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the school staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved this way, the school may refer to the Attendance Advisory Service. The Attendance Advisory Officer will try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve your daughter's attendance have failed and unauthorised absence persist the Attendance Advisory Service can use sanction such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates court.

Alternatively, parents or students may wish to contact the Attendance Advisory Service themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice their telephone number is 020 8921 8510.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your daughter misses the start of the day they can miss work and will not spend time with their form tutor getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for your daughter and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The School day starts at **8.30 am** and we expect your daughter to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **8.35 am** and your daughter will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **8.40am** everyday we operate a Late through the Gate system and detentions are set on a weekly basis with the Pastoral Manager.

At **9.30 am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your daughter arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice or court action if the problem persists.

If your daughter has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Pastoral Manager and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your daughter to school on time.

EVERY MINUTE COUNTS

As well as being absent a lot from school effecting your daughter's development being late also has a big effect please look at the table below.

Lateness = Lost Learning (figures below are calculated over a school year)	
5 mins late each day	3 days lost
10 mins late each day	6.5 days lost
15 mins late each day	10 days lost
20 mins late each day	13 days lost
30 mins late each day	19 days lost

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and punctuality and your daughter has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and you should take time to study them.

The minimum level of attendance and punctuality for this school is 96% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your daughter's attendance and punctuality compares. (The Assistant Principal will send each student a letter, every half term, giving them their attendance and punctuality data) Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our students can be amongst the best in the authority.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Rewards

Students with 100% attendance and punctuality will receive a post card home for each half term and a certificate each term. Students who have 100% attendance and punctuality for the whole academic year are acknowledged at our Celebration of Achievement evening.

Students who significantly improve their attendance and punctuality are also acknowledged with certificates and rewards.

Child Missing Education (CME)

The attendance procedures are crucial to ensuring the safety of all students. When a student has been absent from school for 20 consecutive days without good reason the school has a legal obligation to report the child as missing education (CME) to the relevant local authority. In accordance with DFE regulations the child may be removed from the school roll.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Jill Smith Assistant Principal
Janis Newman School Attendance Officer
Sam Morton School Attendance Assistant
Diane Le Voci RBG Attendance Advisory Officer

Dawn Stevens, Ayesha Lahai-Taylor, Diane Mullins, Gloria Williamson and Debbie Colombeau – Pastoral Managers
Summary:

The school has a legal duty to ensure procedures are in place to support good attendance and punctuality. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend school.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.