

EGGINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL	
<b>Policy for Attendance</b>	
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### **The Aim of the School In Relation To Improving Attendance**

Egginton Primary School aims to work together with parents in order to ensure the achievement of high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils. If pupils are to gain the maximum benefit from the education provided for them at school, it is important that they attend regularly and punctually.

At Egginton Primary School we make parents aware of the clear link between high rates of attendance and high levels of attainment, and aim to establish high levels of expectation in our pupils in relation to punctuality and attendance.

The school aims to be above the national average for attendance for each academic year.

### **The Parents' Legal Duty**

By law parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive an efficient full time education suitable to:-

- i) His/her age, ability, aptitude and
- ii) Any special educational needs he/she may have

through regular attendance at school. A parent includes any adult with whom the child normally resides. A child becomes statutory school age at the start of the term after their fifth birthday.

### **Leave of Absence Requests**

**“Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove reference to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted”**

Due to the above changes in the law, from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, schools no longer have any discretionary powers to allow term time absence. Absence will only be authorised in “exceptional circumstances”, which do not include holidays being cheaper in term-time or family birthdays.

Any request for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Headteacher at least two weeks beforehand (see Appendix 2).

Children are required, by law, to attend school regularly. When children miss time from school it disrupts their education and affects their attainment. This is a particular problem if children are on holiday at the start of term/academic year or during exams.

Each request will be considered by the Headteacher. If a request is refused, and the child still incurs unauthorised absences, then the Local Authority’s Attendance Team can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice against the parent(s)/carer(s). (see Appendix 3)

Where children are absent without a request having been placed, but the school has reason to believe that they are on holiday, then a ‘challenge letter’ will be sent, and a Fixed Penalty

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Notice may be issued if the parent does not provide adequate proof that their child was not on holiday.

A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of issue, rising to £120 after this time. After 28 days of non-payment then the Local Authority will begin proceedings in the magistrates' court, which can lead to fines of up to £2500, parenting orders, community service and/or imprisonment.

The Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice for any period of unauthorised absence regardless of wider attendance.

### **Authorising Absence From School**

If a child is genuinely ill, the school will authorise the absence. However, a note from a parent is not an automatic right to authorisation. Unauthorised absences can lead to an offence being committed by parents.

Where a pattern of absence is noticed, authorisation will be used more cautiously and formal referrals to the local authority attendance officer will be made as appropriate.

The school may request evidence (appointment card, doctor's letter or prescription medication) before authorising an absence.

Unauthorised absences include: going shopping or for a hair cut; visiting relatives or having a family day out; absence for a birthday or party; the unavailability of a regular childminder or a sibling's illness.

The Headteacher will also refer to the NAHT document 'Guidance on authorised absence in schools' (October 2014) when considering whether to authorise absence for exceptional circumstances.

<http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/news-and-media/key-topics/parents-and-pupils/naht-issues-new-guidance-on-authorised-absence/>

### **Registration and Punctuality**

School starts at 8:55am and children should be in their class line at this time. Morning registration for pupils ends at 9:05am and the register in the school office is completed by 9.30am. Afternoon registration ends begins at 1.15pm and ends at 1:20pm. These times are when the registers close. A child arriving later than this must report to the school office where they will be marked in late.

### **Parental Contact**

Parents must contact the school on the first day of absence by calling 01283 732748 by 9.30am at the latest. A note will be made in the register of the reason for absence, and the expected duration. It is expected that a message will be left on the answer-phone if there is no one available to take the call. A note when the child returns will also help to validate the absence. Where a pattern of sickness is established, the school may request that a medical certificate be provided.

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Contact by a parent does not automatically authorise an absence. Absences for circumstances other than illness will be considered for authorisation depending on the individual circumstances.

For all children whose parents have not informed the school of a reason for absence, we will attempt to contact them by text or phone. However, it remains the parents' responsibility to inform the school.

### **Following-up Absence**

Contact will be made by the school office, by approaching parents at the beginning or end of the day, or by telephone or letter. It should be noted that in the case of a number not being available, emergency contacts will be used. If a pupil is absent, every effort will be made by the school to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil and to ensure that they are safe and well.

Registers are regularly monitored by the Attendance Lead and the Access and Attendance Officer. Where no reason for absence has been given by the end of each half term, absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Sickness**

Pupils are not expected to attend to school when they are not well enough to do so whether as a result of short term, long term or recurring illnesses. But they should not be kept away from school when they are well enough to go to lessons or when they have minor ailments which do not prevent them from taking part in their education. A useful rule of thumb is whether the ailment would keep parents/teachers away from work- if not then the child should be in school.

Parents of children with recurring absences for illness will be offered a meeting with the school nurse, who can also see children for a medical check-up, to support more frequent school attendance.

If a child has sickness or diarrhoea, they should be kept off school for a full 48 hours after the last symptoms.

If a child has head lice, once this has been treated, the child may return to school. This will be authorised for a half day only.

Where children miss long periods of schooling due to continued sickness absence or chronic conditions, work can be provided to undertake at home. However, this should not increase the workload of the child's teacher.

### **Persistent Absenteeism**

A pupil becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss more than 10% of school sessions. This data has to be given to the Access and Attendance Team. All Persistent Absentees are then monitored by the Attendance Officer, and support offered to parents to increase the child's rate of attendance.

The Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice in cases where the absence rate continues above 10%. In serious cases, court action may also result. The maximum fine is £1000, and there is also the possibility of a custodial sentence.

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### **Appointments**

The school will need to see an appointment card or letter for hospital or dental appointments, etc; children will only need half a day absence for local appointments.

We discourage children missing school time through parental appointments and again, these will only be authorised depending on the individual circumstances.

### **Communication To Parents**

In order to ensure that all members of the school community are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality, the school places information in the school prospectus and on the school website.

Attendance and punctuality issues are also regularly communicated through the school newsletter.

Where issues arise, the Headteacher will contact parents individually by letter or phone call. Where no improvement is made parents will be invited to a formal meeting.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

By law the register must be taken twice a day in every class and each class teacher is responsible for ensuring that they do this.

The correct coding needs to be used (see Appendix 1) with teachers marking any unknown absence as 'N' and asking parents for a reason for absence on the child's return to school. Children cannot be marked present in advance.

Teachers who notice a pattern of absence (eg a child regularly absent on the same day of the week) should report this to the Attendance Lead (Headteacher).

Parents can expect the school, through the Attendance Lead, to keep them regularly informed of their child's attendance and punctuality record, and to offer support to increase their child's attendance and punctuality.

### **Governor Responsibilities**

Governors may delegate much of the Attendance policy to the Headteacher and other school staff. However by law they are responsible for ensuring its implementation in a fair and transparent manner.

All Governors should ensure that they are aware of the school's current, and target, absence figures, particularly in relation to Persistent Absenteeism.

Governors may be required to sit on appeals panels. They may also be asked to meet with parents who are failing to ensure that their child(ren) attend(s) school regularly, alongside other key staff.

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Approved by Governors: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Review: January 2020

Appendix 1: Register Codes

Attendance:	
/	Present
L	Late before registers closed
D	Dual registration (eg attending Acorns)
Authorised Absence:	
I	Illness
M	Medical/dental appointment
H	Authorised leave of absence
F	Authorised extended leave
R	Religious observance
C	Other authorised circumstances
B	Educated off site
E	Excluded from school
J	Interview
P	Approved sporting activity
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience
Unauthorised Absence:	
N	Reason unknown at present
O	Unacceptable reason/no reason given
G	Unauthorised holiday
U	Late after close of registers
School codes:	
Y	Enforced closure (eg snow)
X	Foundation Stage (attendance not required)
Z	Pupil not on roll

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**APPLICATION  
BY PARENTS**

Appendix 2

Name of Child ..... Year Group .....  
 Name of both parents      Mr .....  
    Mrs/ Ms/Miss .....

Address  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**I / We wish to apply for my / our child to be absent from school for EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.**

Dates:  
 From.....  
 To.....  
 Total number of school days requested .....

<p>Please supply in as much detail as possible the reason for your request and why you feel it is exceptional circumstances:</p>          
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Signed (both parents if applicable)      Date .....

.....  
 .....

**THIS FORM SHOULD BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE OF REQUESTED LEAVE- UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES WILL BE REFERRED TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND MAY INCUR A FIXED PENALTY NOTICE (FINE) OR LEGAL ACTION.**  
 Updated: September 2013

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Appendix 3

**Request for Penalty Notice/s for Leave of Absence for Family Holiday taken that has not been agreed by school.**

The following information is required before the Principal Education Welfare Officer can consider serving a Penalty Notice. Should the Penalty Notice not be paid and the case forwarded for prosecution this information will be used as evidence, in court under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, of unauthorised absence for family holiday that has not been agreed by school.

**Name of School:**

**Pupil information**

Forename: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address including postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates that the pupil was absent from school:**

e.g. 16/05/2014 to 25/05/2014 inclusive. These will be marked with **G** in the register.

**Please note:** If the number of days requested for a holiday **or** if the number of days of authorised holiday already agreed plus the number of days requested exceeds the DfE limit of 10 days in an academic year none of the requested holiday should be authorised.

**Parent 1\* for whom Penalty Notice is being requested**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Forename: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address including postcode, if different from pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent 2\* for whom Penalty Notice is being requested**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Forename: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address including postcode, if different from pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

**A copy is required of each of the following documents:**

Please tick appropriate box to indicate copy is attached to this form.

Holiday Request Form completed by parent/carer

Leave of Absence Calculation Chart, if used: YES  NO

Letter from school to parents indicating that holiday has not been authorised:

Attendance report from beginning of current academic year showing holiday that has not been authorised and return to school:

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(If holiday taken between Sept & Dec {Autumn Term 1 & 2} attendance report for previous academic year also required)

Copy of statement in school prospectus/newsletter warning of consequences of taking holiday in term time that has not been authorised:

**Once the pupil has returned to school following the holiday please send all this information to:**  
Penalty Notices, Education Welfare Services, Derbyshire County Council, Room 396, County Hall,  
Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3AG

If you have any queries regarding Penalty Notices please do not hesitate to contact Education Welfare Services on 01629 538346 or email CAYA EWS HQ [Admin@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:Admin@derbyshire.gov.uk)