

Elm Park Primary School

Inspiring Learners, Enriching Lives, Achieving Together

Attendance Policy



Written by	FVA with EWO Victoria Franklin
Updated by	
Start Date	January 2022
Updated	
Review date	January 2024
Headteacher's Signature	
Chair of Governors' Signature	
Date ratified by FGB	

1. Rationale

Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are the foundations for academic achievement and personal development. They establish a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available at school and underpin the basis for the world of work. Attendance and punctuality are strongly linked to students' well-being and safety and provide lifelong benefits related to these. Regular school attendance demonstrates a commitment to learning and the school community. We will actively promote this ethos throughout and encourage our students to achieve this.

Please ensure that you and your child/children support our school rules about attendance. Where this expectation is not met, we will identify and address the barriers that prevent this.

2. Guiding Principles

We are committed to ensuring that all students benefit from the opportunities available at Elm Park Primary School. Our expectation is that students arrive on time and attend **REGULARLY** (every day that the school is open unless there is an unavoidable reason for not doing so).

3. Responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered students of school age attend school regularly and punctually and that they receive an education suitable for their aptitude and ability.

The school have a legal responsibility for maintaining school registers and taking the register twice a day. First thing in the morning (8.55am) and during the afternoon (1.00pm for the Infants and 1:15pm for KS2). These are referred to as sessions. The school also has a responsibility for reporting absence to the Local Authority. We have a safeguarding responsibility and duty of care to all our students.

Student responsibilities – we encourage our students to become independent young people including sharing responsibility for their attendance and punctuality (when this is age appropriate).

4. Attendance

- ❖ Medical absence for appointments – at Hospital or Orthodontic appointments. (Non-urgent routine check-up appointments should be made for after school hours or during the school holidays.) Students are expected to be absent for the minimal amount of time and not absent for the whole day.
- ❖ Illness.
- ❖ Religious observance.
- ❖ If a student is excluded from school for a behaviour related incident, this is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised (not approved) absence – types of absence that will not be approved:-

- ❖ Absence due to birthday, shopping for uniform, looking after family members.
- ❖ Holiday in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed to by the Head teacher – in advance in line with changes to the law implemented in 2013.
- ❖ Late arrival to school after the register has closed has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence can lead to parents/carers being fined by the Local Authority

All absence – authorised and unauthorised – will be analysed and subject to challenge to ensure that any concern regarding frequency, pattern or validity is acted upon swiftly to ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met.

Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence and each day thereafter informing the school of the reason for absence and the expected date of return to school.

Persistent Absence

- ❖ A student is defined as a persistent absentee if they miss 10% or more of the overall possible sessions they should have attended school. One session = half a day. Research has shown that students who are persistently absent do not achieve as well as those students who are not. There is a strong link between attendance and

- ❖ We acknowledge that hospital and specialist clinic appointments, including orthodontic and on-going dental treatment may require a student having time out of school. Our expectation is that the minimum amount of learning is lost. We will seek an explanation from parents where a whole day is missed for this reason. Proof of unavoidable medical appointments in school time must be provided for the school.
- ❖ Routine, check-up, and non-urgent appointments should be made after school time and during the 12-week school holiday.

Illness

- ❖ Students are likely to experience bouts of illness from time to time. Some students will be managing chronic or more serious medical conditions that impact on their attendance. We will support students in these circumstances to ensure they do not miss out on their education following South Glos Medical Needs Policy
- ❖ When a student is identified as having frequent absence for reasons of minor illness, a meeting will be arranged to discuss this with the Head teacher and/or Education Welfare Officer

Holiday absence in term time

- ❖ If a parent feels there are exceptional circumstances that support a request for leave of absence in term time, they must put the request in writing to the Head teacher.
- ❖ Each case will be considered individually, and the decision communicated to the parents.
- ❖ Where this absence has not been agreed the absence is unauthorised and can lead to parents receiving a fine from the Local Authority.

Procedure

Concerns about absence from school and the likely impact on a students' progress will be communicated to both students and parents through our attendance procedures. We want to work with all our parents/carers to achieve the best attendance and outcomes for our students. We will strive to work together to enable students to gain maximum benefit from education by regular attendance at school.

To be read in conjunction with Elm Park attendance leaflet

Please see Appendix A which shows the flowchart relating to absence and Appendix B which provides references to the law and guidance that informs this policy.

This policy has been agreed by all schools in the **Frome Valley Alliance as a whole Alliance approach**

	School Attendance Meetings have not brought about improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Attendance Panel meeting takes place (Letter sent to arrange) • If no improvement after 4 weeks, school completes a request for an Attendance Panel review chaired by LA representative.
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Appendix B

Law and statutory guidance informing this policy

- ❖ Education Act 1996 which states if any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.
- ❖ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 amended DFE April 2013
- ❖ Parental responsibility measures – regarding Penalty Notices (Fines) DFE updated May 2020
- ❖ Working Together to Safeguard Children DFE updated **December 2020**
- ❖ Keeping children safe in education. DFE updated **January 2021**
- ❖ Educating Children with Health Needs – DFE May 2013 – Ensuring children with health needs do not miss out
- ❖ Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – DFE updated **August 2017**
- ❖ Equality Act 2010
- ❖ SEND Code of practice- DFE- updated April 2020
- ❖ Children missing education – DFE updated September 2016
- ❖ School Attendance Guidance – DFE updated March **2021**