

Eastbank Primary School

Attendance Policy



Every school day makes a difference.

By making sure your child goes to school every day, you're helping them build a bright future and reach their full potential.

Aims

At Eastbank Primary School we seek to encourage good attendance by providing a warm welcoming and stimulating environment, where we hope children will feel safe and happy. This policy aims to outline procedures regarding a child's absence from school.

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities.
- School staff are able to uphold their professional responsibilities in monitoring attendance, and are able to take appropriate action with regards to attendance concerns

Rationale

Our Eastbank Primary School Attendance Policy aligns with the principles outlined in Glasgow's Nurturing City policy. It promotes supportive approaches that are within the ethos of nurture and sit within Glasgow's staged intervention framework. Glasgow, the nurturing city strategy and approach focuses on prevention, early intervention and response to individual need in line with the principles of Getting it Right For Every Child as set out in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.



Inclusive Education: Our attendance policy emphasises the importance of inclusive education, ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their background or circumstances, have equal access to education. This aligns with Glasgow's Nurturing City policy, which emphasises the need for inclusion to create a supportive community for everyone.

Supportive Learning Environment: We strive to create a supportive learning environment that encourages and supports children to come to school. By promoting positive relationships among pupils, teachers, and parents, we aim to create a community where every child feels safe, respected, responsible, appreciated and supported by the Eastbank Team in their educational journey.

Early Intervention and Support: To address attendance issues promptly, our policy incorporates early intervention strategies. We recognise the importance of identifying and addressing any barriers to attendance early on and demonstrating a commitment to providing timely support to children and families facing challenges. We employ a staged intervention approach to supporting children and families with their attendance.

Parental Engagement: Our attendance policy emphasises the active involvement of parents in their child's education. As a school we recognise the challenges that can be part of family life. We encourage open communication between parents, teachers, and school staff to ensure a collaborative approach to addressing attendance concerns and fostering a supportive educational environment.

Celebrating Diversity: Our attendance policy acknowledges and celebrates the diversity within our school community. We strive to create an environment where every child feels a sense of belonging and acceptance, fostering a positive attitude towards attendance.

Why is attendance important?

Coming to school every day is crucial for your child's success. Regular attendance helps children to learn, achieve and grow. It ensures they don't miss out on valuable experiences and creates a positive environment for them to thrive in both academically and socially.

Attendance is also important because:

Legal Obligation: Attendance is a legal requirement in Scotland, placing responsibility on parents to ensure their children attend school regularly.



Academic Success: Regular attendance enhances academic performance, as students consistently engage with the curriculum, contributing to a continuous learning process.

Social and Emotional Development: School attendance fosters social interactions and emotional development, providing students with a supportive community for holistic growth.

Positive School Culture: High attendance rates contribute to a positive school culture, creating an environment where students feel connected, valued, and motivated to learn.

Early Intervention: Monitoring attendance allows for early identification of issues, facilitating timely intervention to support students' overall well-being.

Educational Progress: Consistent attendance helps prevent gaps in learning, supporting students in progressing through the curriculum smoothly.

Preparation for the Future: Punctuality and attendance instil discipline and responsibility, preparing students for future educational and professional settings.

Community Commitment: Attendance reflects a societal commitment to education, emphasising the importance placed on providing every child with a quality learning experience.

Managing & recording absence

All schools are required to keep an attendance register for every pupil (Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975). Children's percentage of attendance is tracked and monitored by the Head Teacher and school office team every 4 weeks and shared termly with the entire school team.

Attendance levels are calculated on a daily basis and all absences from school, including Term Time Holiday Leave, whether authorised or unauthorised will affect a student's percentage of attendance.

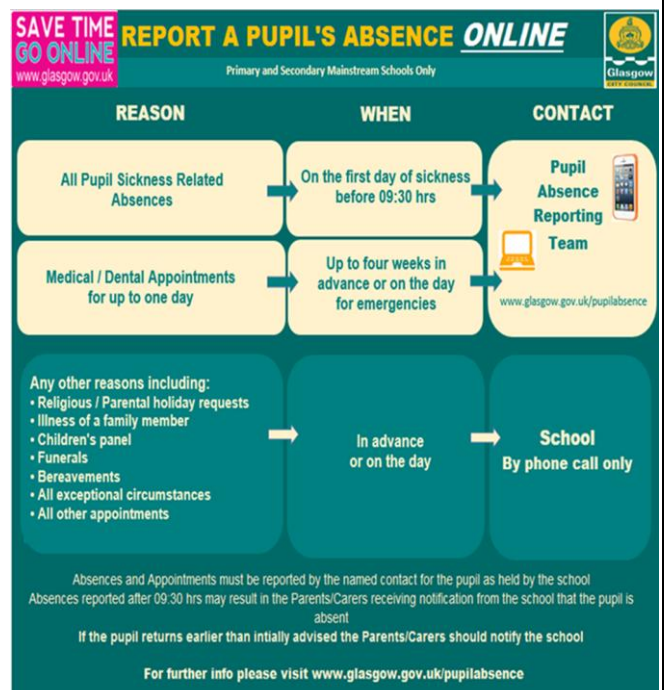
Reporting absence

If a child is going to be absent due to ill health then the named contact should telephone the Pupil Absence Reporting Line on **0141 287 0039** or register to record the absence online. This can also be accessed through Parent Portal.

If a child has an appointment during school hours – e.g. doctor/dentist, they must be collected by a parent or carer from the office and a copy of the appointment letter given to school clerical staff.

To make sure you receive the right support you require, parents and carers should still contact the school directly to report absences of a sensitive or personal nature, for example:

- Bereavement
- Serious illness, for example, an absence which is going to last more than one week
- Injury, for example, broken limb
- Contagious diseases or illness



Authorised absence

Absences from school can be authorised, where there is a legitimate reason. Reasons for authorised absence include:

- Medical and dental appointments
- Religious observance
- Bereavement
- Weddings or funerals of close friends and family
- Meetings prior to, and during court appearances and other legal processes
- Attendance at, or in connection with, a Children's Hearing or Care Review, or appointment with another service provider, e.g. social worker
- Arranged absence in relation to children in Gypsy/Traveller families
- Participation in non-school debates, sports, musical or drama activities agreed by the school
- Lack of transport – including due to bad weather
- Term time holidays where there are exceptional domestic circumstances
- Family recovery from exceptional domestic circumstances or trauma

Unauthorised absence

When there is no perceived valid reason for absence provided by the parent or carer then an absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences include:

- Family holidays during term time
- Holidays, which overlap the beginning or end of term
- Absence with no explanation from the parent/carers

Holiday Requests

Parents / guardians do not have the automatic right to take their child out of school without permission during term time. Authorised time off, during term time, is only given in exceptional circumstances. The school will only authorise absence for a family holiday in the following exceptional circumstances:

- Short term parental placement abroad
- Family returning to its country of origin for family reasons
- The period immediately after a hospitalised illness or accident
- A period of serious or critical illness of a close relative
- A domestic crisis, which causes serious disruption to the family home, causing temporary relocation

Any parent/carers wishing to request time off during term time for a family holiday must call the school office giving the dates of absence.

Absence procedures

1. Parent/Carer calls absence line/completes online form by 9.30am
2. Children/young people absent with no explanation - School office staff will send a Group Call message before 10am to parents/carers requesting explanation of young person's absence.
3. If no response within 1 hour of Group Call, the message will be resent and copied to one other known contact.

4. School will respond to an unexplained absence based on risk associated with the child. Office staff will alert the HT/DHT who will consider next steps.
5. If child/young person is on Child Protection register or is Care Experienced then a member of SLT will be notified and Social Work will be contacted.
6. If school has difficulty making contacts with parents/carers then efforts to trace the family/young person will be made. If there is a significant concern then the Children missing in education procedure will be followed.

Emotional based non-attendance

Emotionally-driven non-attendance in schools can result from various underlying issues affecting a student's mental well-being. Factors such as anxiety, depression, or personal challenges can lead to a reluctance to attend school. Emotional struggles may hinder a student's ability to engage in the learning



environment, impacting their overall educational experience. Recognising and addressing these emotional challenges is crucial to providing the necessary support and creating a school atmosphere that promotes mental health and emotional well-being. By fostering empathy, understanding, and targeted interventions, schools can work towards helping students overcome emotional barriers to attendance and thrive both academically and emotionally.

As a school we strive to work closely with families and children. We recognise the barriers to attendance and will work together with families to provide the appropriate support for them and their children.

Attendance Monitoring/Support

The children's attendance is tracked on a monthly basis and parents/carers will be informed in writing should a child's percentage of attendance fall below 90%.

Attendance Levels:

- **98% + - This is the equivalent of 4 days off during the year. This is above average and represents very good attendance.**
- **Attendance Level 95% to 97% - This is the equivalent of 5 to 9 days off during the year. This is in line with the national average.**
- **Attendance Level 90% to 95% - This is the equivalent of 10 to 19 days off during the year. If attendance continues to fall it could have an impact on learning.**
- **Attendance Level 80% to 90% - This is the equivalent of 20 to 38 days off during the year. Parents/carers will receive a letter from the school and their child's attendance will be monitored closely. Parents/carers may be invited to a meeting to discuss their child's attendance and what support is available to the child and family to improve attendance.**

- **Attendance Level Less Than - 80% - This is the equivalent of more than 38 days off during the year. Parents/Carers will have had letters from the school regarding their child's attendance. They will also have been invited to the school to discuss their child's progress and supports in place. As part of our staged intervention approach there may be multi-agency involvement and the case referred to the Learning Community Joint Support Team.**
- **Failure to engage - If Parents/Carers do not respond to letters, or engage with the school and supports in place, then Social Work may be informed about concerns surrounding attendance. Lack of attendance may result in a child being referred to Social Work and the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA).**
- **Parent/carers may then be invited to appear at a children's panel hearing and if the child's attendance does not improve, court proceedings may follow. This is a last resort but good attendance is vital to your child's success in school and a legal requirement.**

Attendance letter overview

When attendance falls below 90% an initial letter will be issued, notifying parents/carers of their child's attendance percentage.

If there is no sustained improvement in attendance within 4 weeks then a second letter will be issued and parents/carers will be invited to a pastoral care meeting.

Following this if there is no sustained improvement over the next 4 weeks a third letter will be issued inviting parents/carers to attend a further meeting to establish reasons and to discuss alternative supports. Consideration will be given to multi-agency involvement and the case will be referred to the LC JST.

If attendance falls below 75% and there is no further improvement then consideration is given to referral to the children's reporter.

Time-Keeping

We also aim to ensure that all pupils are in class and ready to begin learning for 9am sharp. We operate a soft-start system opening our school doors at 8:50am to welcome all pupils in to school to unpack bags, check-in with friends and school adults and engage in some light learning activities and play.



Celebrating attendance at Eastbank

We issue verbal praise, improved attendance certificates and pencils and share class totals on monthly newsletters in order to ensure that the entire school community are kept informed of school attendance data. We feel this is essential to sustaining the highest possible attendance for each and every child at Eastbank and a way of developing good attendance habits amongst all learners.

How parents/carers can help

You can help our children by:

- ensuring they have everything they need ready for school the night before;
- ensuring regular bedtimes and wake up times on school days;
- ensuring they arrive at school punctually;
- talking to a member of the school staff if there is a problem.

TEAM – TOGETHER EASTBANK ACHIEVES MORE!

Relevant policies/documents:

Management Circular (5a) Included, Engaged & Involved: A positive Approach to the Promotion of Attendance in Glasgow Schools.

Policy Review Date: March, 2025, Mrs Gayle Minnis, Head Teacher

