



Attendance policy: Summer 2026 - Summer 2027

1. Aims

East Halton Primary School promotes attendance as part of ongoing safeguarding to ensure learners are safe. By attending school children have the opportunity to meet their educational outcomes, have supportive adults in their lives and are able to share any concerns they have with staff who have a genuine interest in their development.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent (less than 90%) and severe absence (less than 50%)
- Ensuring every child has access to the education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure children have the support in place to attend school We promote and support punctuality in attending the school and all lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Working Together to Improve School Attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

- The Education (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governors

The Governors are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- ❑ Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- ❑ Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The link governor responsible for attendance is Mr Robert Biglands.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ❑ Implementation of this policy at the school
- ❑ Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- ❑ Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- ❑ Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- ❑ Requesting the local authority consider the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader is responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- ❑ Leading attendance across the school
- ❑ Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- ❑ Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- ❑ Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- ❑ Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- ❑ Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- ❑ Delivering targeted intervention and support to children and families
- ❑ Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- ❑ Providing regular attendance reports to school staff
- ❑ Working with the local authority through a multi-disciplinary approach to tackle all absence, including persistent and severe
- ❑ Consideration of issuing penalty notices from the local authority

The member of staff responsible for attendance is Miss Twidale supported by Mrs Lunn and Mrs James.

3.4 Class teachers/ Assistant teachers

Class teachers / Assistant teachers are responsible for reporting attendance. They will do this by informing the school office of children's attendance through a daily register. Attendance is recorded twice daily. This will be done at the start of the school day and once during the afternoon session.

3.5 School office staff

School office staff will:

- ☐ Record the child's attendance using the appropriate code
- ☐ Take calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record appropriately
- ☐ Call the parents/carers of a child if they do not present themselves within 30 mins of the start of the first session. If the school has not already received advanced notification from parents/carers of the absence, the school will make contact with home to ascertain the reason for the absence. Attendance is electronically recorded in the school.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- ☐ Make sure their child attends every day on time and equipped to learn
- ☐ Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- ☐ Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- ☐ Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

3.7 Children

Children are expected to:

- ☐ Attend the school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

East Halton Primary School will keep an attendance register and place all children onto this register.

East Halton Primary School will take an attendance register at the start of the first session (morning) of each school day and once during the second session (afternoon). It will mark whether every child is:

- ☐ Present
- ☐ Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- ☐ Absent
- ☐ Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- ☐ The original entry
- ☐ The amended entry
- ☐ The reason for the amendment
- ☐ The date on which the amendment was made
- ☐ The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

East Halton Primary School will also record:

❑ Whether the absence is authorised or not - it is the headteacher decision to authorise an absence (not the parent)

❑ The nature of the activity if a child is attending an approved educational activity

❑ The nature of circumstances where a child is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

East Halton Primary School will keep every entry on the attendance register for at least 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Children must arrive in school by 9am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55 am and will be kept open until 9.00 am. The register for the second session will be taken in the afternoon.

Children arriving at other times of the day may be marked present if this is part of an agreed plan for example at the request of a medical practitioner.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The child's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7)

Parents/carers should report absence to the school on 01469 540273

The school will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The school will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and is able to show evidence of the appointment e.g. as a letter, appointment card or on their mobile device.

Parents and carers should request leave of absence by calling the school office.

However, parents/carers are encouraged and requested to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the child should be out of education for the minimum amount of time necessary and should attend before and after the appointment.

The child's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A child who arrives late:

- ❑ Before the register has closed will be marked as authorised late, using the appropriate code
- ❑ After the register has closed will be marked as unauthorised late, using the appropriate code
- ❑ Children who are identified as being persistently late will have a meeting called with parents to discuss reasons for lateness and how this can be rectified.

Persistent lateness may result in the issuing of a penalty notice where parents/carers will be subject to a monetary fine

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any child who is expected to attend the school but does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- ❑ Call the child's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, the school will attempt a home visit to safeguard the child
- ❑ Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- ❑ Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the session
- ❑ Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will utilise a multi-disciplinary approach and involve local authority partners in order to improve attendance for the child.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels if there is a concern.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a child during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and evidence, and relevant context behind the request. Request for leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday is unlikely to be authorised

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request, the headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- ❑ Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- ❑ Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- ❑ Traveller children travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Romani people, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling

for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the child is attending educational provision

- ☐ Study Leave

- ☐ Part time timetables and transitions – this should be in accordance with the agreed part time timetable and integration policy and only in very exceptional circumstances, time limited and regularly reviewed

- ☐ EHCP requirements

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority on behalf of schools/academies and the police. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- ☐ The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- ☐ One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as unauthorised holidays taken in term time without permission

- ☐ Where a suspended/excluded child is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason. If the payment remains unpaid after 28 days, the local authority will issue legal proceedings against parents/carers.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Staff at the school are committed to promoting and achieving good levels of attendance in accordance with the school attendance policy. Underpinning this commitment is a belief that only if children attend school regularly, can they take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

In addition to this, the school promotes an environment where children feel safe and valued.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- ☐ Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual child level

- ☐ Identify whether or not there are particular groups of or individual children whose absences may be a cause for concern

- ☐ Attendance is a standing item on the agenda at Senior Leadership Team meetings and children or groups of children who are cause for concern are discussed and a plan is put into action

- ☐ Monitoring takes place as part of a whole school priority and starts within the classroom itself

- ☐ The school will monitor itself against local, regional and national data regularly and take action to improve attendance where needed

- ☐ The school will regularly feedback to the governing body its attendance data and actions taken to ensure attendance remains a key focus and priority for the whole school

7.2 Analysing attendance

The School will:

- ☐ Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify children or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these children and their families
- ☐ Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The School will:

- ☐ Provide regular attendance reports to all teaching staff, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with children and families at the earliest opportunity
- ☐ Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a learner misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a learner misses 50% or more of school.

The School will:

- ☐ Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- ☐ Hold regular meetings and work alongside parents of children who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school and ensure children are accessing the education to which they are entitled
- ☐ Offer Early Help Support and other attendance support to support better school attendance
- ☐ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the board of governors.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- ☐ Safeguarding policy
- ☐ Relationship and Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Code	Full name	Description
		The student is counted as present.

/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.

S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
The student is counted as absent/ unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.

Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.