**Eddleston Primary School**

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**Attendance policy**

***Updated December 2020***

**Aims and Objectives**

**Through this guidance we aim to:**

* Improve pupils’ achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
* Achieve a minimum of 97% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
* Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
* Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child’s education.
* Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and other agencies, so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
* Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of responsibility.
* Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

**We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:**

* Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
* Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
* Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child’s age and development.
* Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils and staff on school attendance matters.
* Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
* Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school, which are preventing good attendance.
* Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

**Attendance and the Law**

All schools are required to monitor pupil attendance by law. All schools are required to submit attendance and absence figures to Scottish Borders Council Education Service in the first instance and also to the Scottish Government.

Quality Improvement Officers monitor school attendance figures on a termly basis and these figures are discussed at Quality Assurance meetings.

Attendance data is tracked and monitored at school, authority and Scottish Government level. At Eddleston Primary, the Head Teacher monitors the attendance daily and tracks attendance monthly. Letters are sent out to parents/carers whose children’s attendance is causing concern or where patterns of absence have been observed.

**Administration**

In the event of an absence/late arrival, parents/carers are requested to contact the school office by telephone – **01721 730210** – or by email **julie.mackenzie@scotborders.gov.uk** (not to the Head Teacher’s email as the HT may not be in school or able to check email accounts) This information should be relayed to the school no later than 9am on the day of absence.

**Process for absent pupils**

Step 1: If a pupil is absent from school and no contact has been made to the school by 9am, the School Administrator will contact the parents/carers via the telephone numbers provided.

Step 2: If no contact can be obtained via telephone call, a GroupCall message will be sent to the parents/carers asking them to contact the school as soon as possible.

Step 2: If contact can’t be made via telephone call/GroupCall message to the parents/carers, the emergency contacts provided will be phoned.

Step 3: A follow-up email will be sent by the School Administrator and Head Teacher to the parents/carers.

Step 4: If no contact can be established, the Head Teacher will contact Social Work Services/the School Home Link Officer to make them aware of the absence. The Head teacher may also decide to make a home visit where appropriate.

**Absence Requests**

Where children are required to be absent from school for a short time during the day such as a hospital appointment then parental permission must be provided with clear collection arrangements. This should be emailed to **julie.mackenzie@scotborders.gov.**uk or a letter sent in to school. Ideally planned dental appointments and the like should be arranged for after school.

In the case of planned longer term absence e.g holiday, parents/carers must notify the Head Teacher in writing or by email to **lorna.murdoch@scotborders.gov.uk** Holidays during term time should be avoided/cannot be authorised by the Head Teacher and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

**Cause for concern:**

Most children have few difficulties and are rarely absent. Sometimes poor attendance is due to poor health. Whilst we understand that children will be absent when poorly, we do expect your child to be here all other days. Individual pupil attendance is expected to be no less than 95%.

Where a child’s attendance is a real cause for concern the school will have regular meetings with the family and interventions will be put in place. Where these interventions are unsuccessful, a report may be submitted to the Children’s Reporter.