



ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our second attendance newsletter of the year. **We send an attendance newsletter once a term** to keep you up-to-date with how we monitor attendance here at EHPS but also to inform you of the legislation that surrounds children attending school.



As you are aware we send out half-termly emails which inform families of their child's attendance percentage and whether they would be in a green, amber or red band. Please be aware that every time we send out these emails, the percentage is calculated from the start of the academic year (September) and not termly. Our approach is to always be supportive whilst acknowledging the importance of children attending school. Please know that we fully understand that children get poorly and will need time off school. We look at every case on an individual basis. However, if your child's absence falls below 96% we may unauthorise future absences.

Please also be aware that lateness is also part of our attendance monitoring.

Mainstream gates open at 8.30am
Specialist Unit gates open at 8.40am

Mainstream Registration is at 8.45am
Specialist Unit Registration is at 8.55am

Thank you to all our families who always strive to get their child into school every day on time because know we can teach children better when they are sitting in front of us.

Please book doctors/dentist appointments outside the school day whenever possible.

We run "Welcome Back" sessions with children who are absent for 5 days or more. This is an informal meet & greet with a member of our pastoral team (usually with a drink and biscuit) to help settle them back in.

Finally, I am very aware that families can experience real barriers to getting their child to school on time, or at all, and that is why, we will also strive to work closely with you when ever we can. Therefore, if you ever need any support or help with your child's attendance, or would simply like to know more, please do not hesitate to contact either: Mrs York, who is our attendance lead in mainstream alongside Mrs Karen Keay or Mrs Lucy Boswell, if your query is relating to a child in our Specialist Unit.

I hope you found our attendance newsletter informative and don't forget our attendance emails come out at the start of each half term.

Ms Pennington

Year Group	Attendance from 4th Sept to 20th December 2024	Year Group	Attendance from 4th Sept to 20th December 2024
Reception	94.70%	1	97.32%
2	95.21%	3	96.48%
4	95.09%	5	95.24%
6	95.26%	Whole School	95.62%

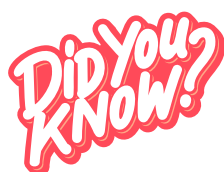
Can I ask for help in getting my child to attend school?

There is help available at school to support you with your child's attendance. Please either speak to your child's class teacher or telephone school and ask to speak to one of the Pastoral Team. We can arrange to meet in school to discuss what the issues might be and share ideas about how we can work together to improve attendance.



How to report your child's absence

Call: 01604 677971 Email: absence@easthunsburyprimary.org

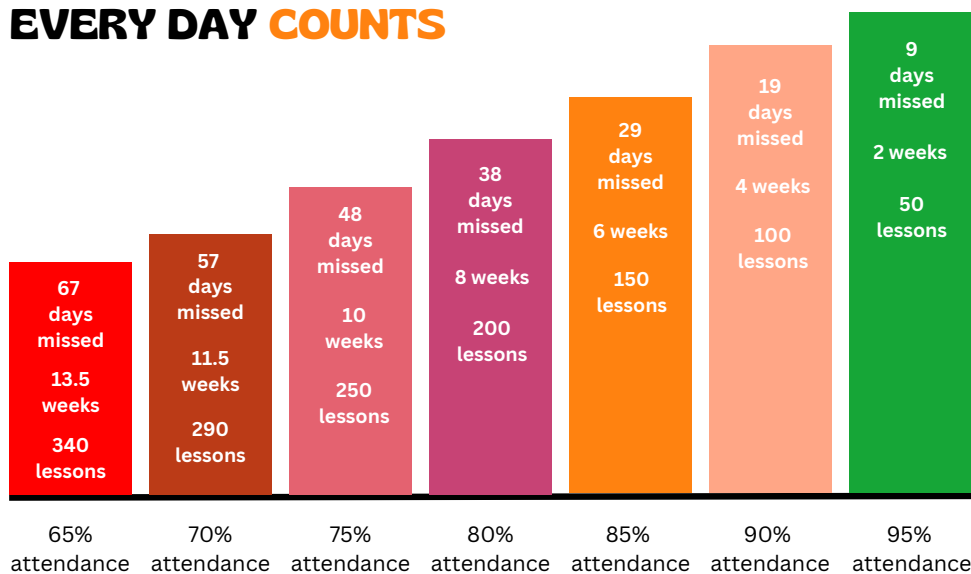


175 days are not spent at school so there's plenty of time for holidays and appointments



ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

EVERY DAY COUNTS



96 - 100%

Good

Good attendance giving the best chance of educational and future success

90 - 95%

Cause for concern

Poor attendance giving less chance of success and creating gaps in learning

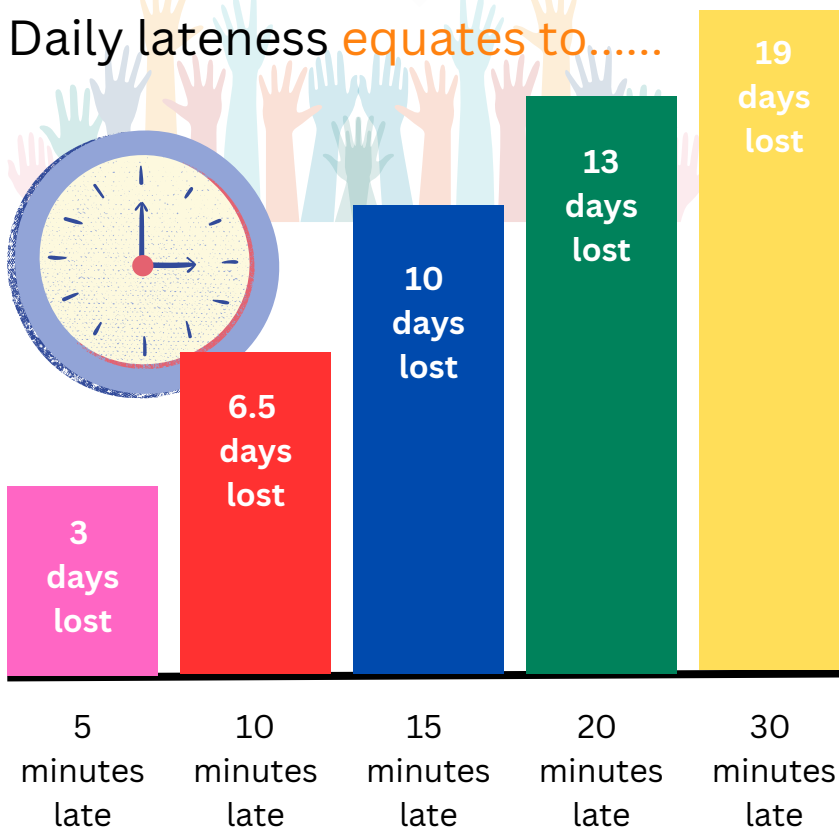
89% and below

Seriously worried

Very poor attendance. Drastic effect on academic achievement



Daily lateness equates to.....



Over one academic year



BE KIND

WORK HARD

BELIEVE

EHPS Steps to Improve Attendance

1

Termly Newsletters advising families of our whole school attendance focuses and processes. Celebrating success as well as identifying issues.



2

Half termly emails to families to advise of child's percentage attendance.

These are categorised as:

Red (below 90%)

Amber (90-95%)

Green (96+)

3

The attendance team will look at individual pupils at Amber or Red and decide next steps. These could be:

- Continued monitoring
- Informal meeting with family
- Parent Contract Meeting
- According to our monitoring letters will then be sent to families.



4

Letter 2 will invite families to an Informal Meeting to discuss reasons for absence and possible support. Attendance will then be monitored for 10 weeks. If there is improvement, then there will be no further action but we will continue to monitor.

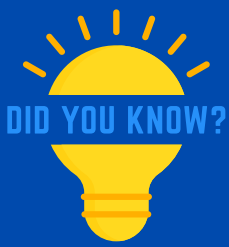
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Letter 3 will invite families to a Parent Contract Meeting where a formal agreement is made. Parents are made aware that if attendance does not improve they will be referred to SASS and could be interviewed under caution and need to pay a considerable fine for the offence of failing to ensure regular attendance (under section 444 of the Education Act 1996)



6

The attendance team will continue to monitor weekly and attendance is an agenda point on our weekly safeguarding meetings. Regular monitoring and action will raise attendance across our school.



Did you know?

Schools have a safeguarding duty, under Section 175 Education Act 2022 to investigate any unexplained absences.

Working together

Our aim is always to work with families to help improve a child's attendance. We know that there are many reasons why children do not attend school, so we want to support families on an individual basis. However, when we are not successful in supporting families, or they refuse to engage, the law protects pupils' rights to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts.

As such parents could be:

- issued a Penalty Notice by the local authority for their child's non-attendance. The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- Where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution by the Local Authority under section 444 Education Act 1996 but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Meet our Pastoral Team



Lucy Boswell

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head of the SU

boswelll@easthunsburyprimary.org



Karen Keay

Pastoral and Attendance Lead

keayk@easthunsburyprimary.org



Lindsey York

SENCO and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

yorkl@easthunsburyprimary.org



Krista Neville

Family Support Worker

nevillek@easthunsburyprimary.org

Please do not hesitate to contact them if you or your child should require any additional support. 01604 677970

What is compulsory school age?

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the 1st term after their 5th birthday, so:



- children who turn 5 between 1st January and 31st March will be of compulsory school age at the beginning of the school term after 31st March;
- children who turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August will be of compulsory school age at the beginning of the school term after 31st August;
- children who turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December will be of compulsory school age at the beginning of the school term after 31st December.

A child remains of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June in the school year that they turn 16 years old. young people are then required to remain in education, employment or training until their 18th birthday.

Who is considered a parent in education law?

Section 576 Education Act 1996 defines a parent widely to include:

- a biological parent of the child (even if they do not have Parental Responsibility and even if the child does not reside with that parent);
- any person who is not a parent but has Parental Responsibility for the child (for example through a Residence Order, Child Arrangements Order, Special Guardianship Order, Step-Parental Responsibility Order, Adoption Order or Care Order);
- someone who has care of the child.

Therefore all these people have the duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education. This does not mean that the child has to attend a school – it is possible to fulfil this duty by home educating the child.

School has to regularly inform the Local Authority of any pupils who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or who have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission. Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence.



Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

A REMINDER



We thought we'd share the information given in Autumn's newsletter

National Changes

You may be aware that there are some changes to attendance which have been introduced at Government level including a new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence. This National Framework aims to:

- Make penalty notices more effective by ensuring they are only used in cases where they are the most appropriate tool to change parental behaviour and improve attendance
- Prioritise the support first approach by expecting support to be used in cases where it is appropriate and using penalty notices in cases where support is not appropriate (e.g. a term time holiday) has not worked or has not been engaged with.
- Improve consistency in the use of penalty notices across England by introducing a new national threshold at which they are considered.
- Improve the deterrent effect of a penalty notice by increasing the amount and introducing a new national limit of 2 penalty notices within a 3 year period to break cycles of repeat offending.

How does this National Framework affect you...?

Here are some initial key points of information:

When would a penalty notice be considered? After 10 sessions (which is equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 week period.

There is an increase to the rate of a penalty notice from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days (per child).

If you receive a second penalty notice e.g same parent for the same child(ren) within a rolling 3-year period, you will automatically be charged the higher rate of £160 with no option of the charge to be reduced to £80.

There is a national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period so at the 3rd 'offence' you may be considered for prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions rather than a fine.

You may receive a Notice to Improve from West Northants Council or the school which is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued.

Acceptable reasons for absence

We recognise that there are circumstances where a pupil's absence can't be avoided.

Acceptable reasons for being absent from school include:

- **Illness:** when your child is unwell, either physically or mentally, and unable to attend school
- **Medical appointments:** if your child has a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, please notify us in advance and provide relevant documentation (e.g. an appointment card)

Religious observance: we respect the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of our pupils. If your child needs to be absent for religious observance, please submit a request and the headteacher will review the absence request

Exceptional circumstances: in exceptional situations, such as family emergencies or unforeseen events, please contact the school immediately to discuss the absence.

How to report unplanned absences

In the event of an unplanned absence, we request you follow these steps:

- **Contact the school:** on the day of the absence. Please call the school office before 9am to inform us about your child's absence.
- **Provide a reason for absence:** please provide a brief explanation for the absence, such as illness or family emergency, to help us maintain accurate records
- **Send a written note upon return:** when your child is ready to return to school after an absence, please send a written note explaining the reason for the absence. This note should be given to your child's class teacher

How to apply for a pre-planned leave of absence

Visit the school office and ask for a Leave of Absence form and return it completed to the school prior to the absence starting. You can also find the form on our [website](#).

Fines for unauthorised absence

Under Section 444 a person is guilty of an offence for failing to secure regular school attendance of their child, if their child is of compulsory school age and is a registered pupil at a school. Where continued absence is a concern referral may be made to the Local authority who may take legal action.

Legal action against you may result in either:

- A Penalty Notice with a potential fine of up to £120 per child.
- Prosecution under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 where, if convicted, you may be fined up to £1,000.
- Prosecution under Section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996 where, if convicted, you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or imprisonment.

My question hasn't been answered here

Please get in touch with any one of our Safeguarding team by calling the school office or contacting them via our [website](#) with any further questions, and we'll be happy to discuss them with you.

- Lucy Boswell - Designated Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Head & SU Lead
- Lindsey York – Assistant Head, SENCO and Deputy DSL
- Kathryn Pennington - Headteacher
- Julia Fenton – Assistant Head
- Kelly Roberts - Senior Leader & Health and Wellbeing Lead
- Krista Neville - Family Support Worker
- Karen Keay - Pastoral & Attendance Lead

We are aiming for every child to have an attendance of at least 96%!