



ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Owner: Emma Redgrave

Effective Date: September 2025 Review Date: September 2026

Legal Status:

- Complies with Part 6, paragraph 32 (3)(a)(b) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 in force from the 5th January 2015.
- School Attendance Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (DfE: October 2014)
 - Working together to improve school attendance (DfE: August 2024)

Other relevant documents:

- Admissions Policy

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than September 2026, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed: *E. Redgrave*

Headteacher

Date: October 2025

1. Introduction

Eastcourt Independent School expects all pupils on roll to attend school every day when the school is in session, provided they are fit and healthy to do so. Regular attendance is essential for pupils to make the best possible progress and to benefit fully from the educational opportunities offered by the school.

The school is committed to encouraging good attendance through positive engagement, clear procedures, and supportive communication with parents and pupils. We believe that fostering a positive attitude towards school life plays a vital role in promoting consistent attendance. Eastcourt strives to make the school a welcoming, engaging, and rewarding environment for all children.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that Admission and Attendance Registers are maintained in accordance with statutory requirements. For all pupils of compulsory school age, attendance is recorded at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Attendance for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is also recorded. Registers must indicate whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised, and the Headteacher ensures that compliant admissions and attendance records are maintained at all times.

Eastcourt Independent School is committed to equality of opportunity. No child will be refused entry or discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.

Important: Family holidays must be taken outside of school term time. Requests for term-time holidays will not normally be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.



2. Definitions

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child is away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received appropriate notification from a parent or guardian. Examples include:

- Illness or medical appointments (supported by a note, email, or telephone call to the school office);
- Approved leave for religious observance or exceptional family circumstances.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences explained by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, taking a child out of school for shopping, birthdays, or family holidays during term time will not be authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission from the school and the parent, or when the reason provided is not deemed acceptable. For example, if a child is absent from school for a family trip during term time without approval, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and is strongly discouraged at Eastcourt.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Attendance Champion (a member of a school's senior leadership team) to set a clear vision, using attendance data to identify risks, establish systems for tackling absence, and work with pupils and families to address barriers to attendance.

3. Procedure When a Child is Absent

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school when a child is unexpectedly absent. Parents or guardians must notify the school office as soon as possible, ideally before 9:00 a.m. (0208 590 5472/ eastcourtschoolwelfare@outlook.com)

If the office is informed first, the class teacher will be notified; if the class teacher is informed, they must, in turn, notify the school office.

The class teacher will record the absence in the register.

A written note, email, or telephone message should be provided to explain the reason for the absence (e.g., for medical appointments) by 9am the morning of the absence. All correspondence regarding absences is directed to the School Welfare Co-Ordinator/Attendance Officers (eastcourtschoolwelfare@outlook.com) and stored appropriately, either electronically or in the pupil's file.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher must notify the school office immediately. The school will then contact the parent or guardian to check on the child's safety.

4. Requests for Leave of Absence

The school believes that pupils need to attend all sessions in order to make maximum progress. Parents are expected to arrange family holidays and events during school holidays. Term-time leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Parents requesting leave of absence must do so in writing or by email to the Headteacher (admin@eastcourtschool.org.uk), at least one week in advance, outlining the reason for the request. The Headteacher will consider the individual circumstances before reaching a decision.

5. Long-Term Absence

Where a pupil is unable to attend school for a period exceeding five days due to illness or other authorised reasons, the school will make reasonable efforts to provide learning materials or remote access to educational resources so that the child can continue their studies at home.

6. Repeated Unauthorised Absences

The school will contact parents or guardians if a pupil has an unauthorised absence. If repeated unauthorised absences occur, the parents will be required to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the matter.



Persistent absenteeism may be referred to the appropriate local authority or educational welfare service, in line with statutory obligations. <https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=118050>

7. Record Keeping and Monitoring

The Headteacher holds overall responsibility for monitoring school attendance and ensuring that all attendance records are accurate, complete, and up to date.

Attendance records will be securely maintained for a minimum of five years in compliance with statutory requirements.

Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance within their classes on a daily basis and must follow up any absences promptly through the school office.

Attendance, punctuality ("Lates"), and unauthorised absences are reviewed and discussed regularly during weekly staff meetings and daily briefings to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach.

The school day begins at 8:50 a.m.; pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as *late*. Pupils collected after 3:45 p.m. will also be recorded as *late* and will be placed into the after-school club, for which parents/carers will be charged the standard session fee (£15).

Any concerns regarding a pupil's attendance or punctuality must be reported immediately to the Headteacher for review and appropriate action.

The Headteacher will issue reminders to parents and carers regarding the importance of regular attendance when necessary. Where attendance does not improve, or where a pupil accrues more than 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, the matter will be formally referred to the Local Authority in line with statutory guidance. (Please see guidance below).

8. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Missing Child Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy

9. Important Information

Miss Jessica Harvey - School Welfare Co-Ordinator/Attendance Officer - eastcourtschoolwelfare@outlook.com

Miss Emma Redgrave – Headteacher/The Senior Attendance Champion (responsible for improving student attendance). **0208 590 5472**

Mrs Janet Mitchell - Designated Safeguarding Lead admin@eastcourtschool.org.uk

Mrs Christine Redgrave Proprietor **0208 590 5472**

10. Further Guidance:

Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, Independent schools and local authorities https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence –implementation guide for local authorities <https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=118050>