

Safeguarding

Non-collection of children from school

The school will follow the procedure agreed with children's social care:

1. We will check with your child to see if there are any changes to arrangements for collection and try to make contact with you or other family members on your contact list, and wait with your child until someone comes to collect them. (Children will not be released into the care of another parent even where they offer to take your child home).
2. We will contact the SPOC Professionals' Consultation Line to seek advice at 4pm if there are difficulties in contacting you or other family members on your contact list.
3. If all possible means of contact have been exhausted and no contact can be made with you by 4.30pm, the school will contact SPOC and if advised to do so the police, who will arrange to collect the child or make arrangements for the child to be transported to the children's social office.
4. We will regularly ask parents to confirm and update contact details and to nominate a family member or friend who can collect the child in the event that they are unable to do so.
5. Where children are regularly uncollected or collected late, this should be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead. If there are also child protection concerns, a referral should be made to children's social care via SPOC.

A child missing from Education (CME)

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. We will follow the school's safeguarding policy and Croydon's Children Missing from Education policy, particularly when children are absent without reason on repeated occasions. To help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of children going missing in future, it is also essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns such as travelling to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage.



Attendance Policy for Parents/Carers

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.

Attendance Policy

Attendance

Excellent attendance is a key factor in high achievement and at Elmwood Infant School we believe that parents, carers, teachers and our governors have a duty to encourage maximum attendance at school.

We recognise that statistically children's whose attendance falls below 95% achieve significantly less well than their peers and for that reason emphasise the need for pupil attendance to be maximised.

Parents and carers of children in the school, are responsible for ensuring that their children come to school every day and arrive at school on time. Therefore, we will be working in partnership with our parents and carers in order to achieve this.

Lateness/Punctuality

Being on time is also very important. When children are late for school, they not only miss out on valuable learning time but also disrupt their classmates who are already settled. For some children who are persistently late this can be an embarrassing experience that may lead to uncooperative and disruptive behaviour at school and home as children try to avoid the situation.

School finishes at 3.10pm. For different but equally important reasons your child should be collected on time. Children waiting and not knowing why parents are late can cause anxiety, especially when they observe that other members of their class have been collected and have gone home.

In the event that anyone who is not authorised to do so attempts to collect your child, the school will not allow your child to leave but will contact you immediately.

What can parents do to help?

1. Let the School Office know as soon as possible why your child is away.
2. Make non-emergency appointments outside school time. Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary.

If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

- Make an appointment to see a member of staff. This could be the Attendance Officer, Class Teacher, Learning Mentor or a Senior Leader.
- You may wish to contact the EWO, who will work with you and the School to resolve the situation (Please see the Attendance Officer and she will put you in contact with the EWO).

Procedures

Low attendance rates (95% and below)

Pupil absence rates are carefully monitored. When attendance rates fall below 95%, or there are regular periods of unexplained absence, we will need to work with parents to increase the amount of time a child spends in school. In such cases, the Attendance Officer and/or the Education Welfare Officer invite parents/carers in to discuss the reasons for the absences and consider possible solutions. Where there is little or no improvement, the Headteacher will invite you in for an 'attendance review'.

Trigger points

The Attendance Officer will be monitoring children's attendance which falls below 95% and children who have 5 separate periods of illness.

Leave of absence during term time/holidays

A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which we and parents must seek to avoid.

Every effort must be made to maximise your child's attendance before you decide to take your child out of school. If you take your child out during term time; please contact the Attendance Officer as soon as possible. We will need you to complete an 'Leave of absence' form and we will also require to see a copy of your child's tickets (departure and return along with the booking confirmation date) and medical evidence to support your child's absence. This evidence will be reviewed by the school and we will decide whether your child's absence will be authorised or unauthorised; we consider each case individually taking into account your child's previous years attendance. **(We can only authorise up to 10 school days if attendance the previous year was 95% or above)**. If unauthorised, you may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine).

Please note: The Governing Board of Elmwood Infant School have made the decision **not to authorise families taking holidays during term time**. If parents/carers take their child out of school during term time for a holiday, you may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine). Again, we will require you to inform the Attendance Officer as soon possible, complete a 'Leave of absence' form and provide us with a copy of your child's departure and return tickets.

Rewards for Excellent Attendance

In an attempt to improve attendance we will reward individual and whole classes by:

- Celebrating whole class achievement with a special certificate for the best attendance at the end of the week.
- Celebrating 100% attendance (weekly) with a special reward for the whole class on every occasion.
- Rewarding pupils who achieve 100% each term and the whole school year with a sticker and a certificate.
- Children who have 100% attendance at the end of each term will be entered into a prize draw and will be in the chance of winning a prize.



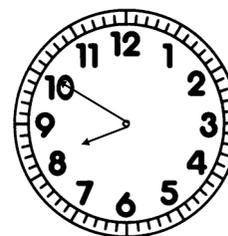
Concerns

In cases of absences where we have not heard from a parent/carer, the Attendance Officer, or a member of the office staff will contact parents/carers at the beginning of the school day. If we are unable to make contact that morning, then we may complete a home visit. If a child has a Child Protection Plan we will contact Social Care and the Police, if appropriate. Cases where concerns may be heightened would be:

- Persistently poor attendance
- Persistent lateness
- If a child is subject to a protection plan
- Or, if we perceive the child to be in any danger.

Important Times of the School Day

School begins at 8:50am and all children are expected to be settled and ready for registration at 9am. Children arriving after 9am are marked as late (L) and are required to enter the school via the School Office.



The main gate & classroom doors are closed promptly at 9am
(please do not arrive at the school gate for 9am as you will be late)

Children arriving after 9:30am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the whole morning (U). In cases of persistent lateness, the parent/carer(s) will be sent a letter.

Reminder:

Please remember to call the School Office every morning if your child is going to be absent or late on 0208-689-7681

Absences

There are two types of absences: Authorised and Unauthorised.

What is an Authorised Absence?

Many absences are for good reasons and will therefore be authorised by the school. These include absence for:

- Illness (regular absences due to illness will be monitored)
- Religious Observance (maximum of 2 per academic year)
- Compassionate leave such as bereavement

What is an Unauthorised Absence?

These are absences where the reasons are not considered acceptable by the school and the Local Authority. The following circumstances will not be authorised:

- A parent has overslept and does not think they should send their child to school
- Birthdays
- The child has a non infectious condition
- Medical appointments that last all day
- Weddings
- Airport runs
- Unwell parents or relatives
- *Holidays during term time (please see section 'Procedures')

Parents/carers should make medical appointments for after school hours or during the school holidays. If this is not possible you must provide medical evidence or it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Please inform the Office of your child's appointment.

If your child has a case of vomiting and or diarrhoea they must be kept away from school for 24 hours from the last episode.

Parents and carers are expected to notify the school immediately (on each day) if their child is going to be absent from school and the reason why. If we do not hear from you, the Attendance Officer will try to contact you. If the school is unable to contact you by phone, then a letter will be sent home. You are advised to respond to the letter or your child's absence will go as unauthorised. If we have no contact from you after 3 days of absence, we will conduct a visit to your home address.

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The school works very closely with the EWO. Referrals are made to the EWO when the school is concerned about high levels of absences and persistent lateness. The EWO may in cases of unacceptable unauthorised absence, refer the case to the Local Authority for a **Fixed Penalty Notice** or in some cases, Court.

An **FPN** is a **fine**. Parents who are issued an **FPN** will be expected to pay a fine of **£60** per child of concern, per parent.

Every attempt will be made by the school to work in partnership with you to ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time. The Attendance Officer will arrange to meet with parents to discuss attendance issues in order to improve the attendance of the child. However, if there is not an improvement in your child's attendance/time keeping then the school will refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service.

If you require any further information, please refer to the Croydon Council website:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/education/schools-new/attendance/attendance-law>

Important names:

Attendance Officer—Miss B. Bittles

Education Welfare Officer— Miss K Beard (Folio)