



**COAST**  
ACADEMIES

---

*Attendance Policy*

---

## Key contacts for Coast Academies:

	Eden Park/Preston	Cockington
DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)	Deb Mawbey (Assistant Head)	John-Paul Sharman
Attendance Team	Leanne Shone, Deb Mawbey, Sue Killick	Steph Musselwhite
Executive Head	Ken Kies	N/A
Head of School/Headteacher	Scott Ord (Preston Primary) Ian Morgan (Eden Park)	Rik Meek

## Rationale

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is developed and maintained. We expect all children to attend every day, when school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:

- Attainment in school.
- Relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting relationships.
- Confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others.

## Definition

Every half day absence has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing, by telephone, by e-mail or via text.

### **AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised.

### **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Head. Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Holidays during term time
- Special treats such as birthdays, visiting relatives or shopping
- Child not able to get to school due to parents/carers illness or attending parental medical appointments

### Attendance statistics

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

100%	Excellent – well done! This will help with all aspects of your child's progress and life in school. This will give them a brilliant start in life and a positive work ethic.
96% +	Very Good – Well done keep on trying hard to achieve 100%.
96-90%	Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. You will be receiving letters from our attendance officer and offered support to encourage improved attendance. This may take a range of forms. (See Appendix two). A penalty notice will be considered to improve attendance at this point.
Below 90%	Unacceptable – Absence IS causing SERIOUS CONCERN. It IS affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. The school pastoral team, including our attendance worker will be working with you to improve your child's attendance and will offer you various solutions which you can access. <b>This level of attendance is prosecutable by the Local Authority.</b> Only the school can "authorise" absence.

### Acceptable reasons for authorised absence

Even when seeking authorisation for the reasons listed below, failure to provide evidence when requested may result in the absences being unauthorised.

## Illness

- Medical evidence may be requested where a child has been absent for 3 days or more due to illness OR where a child's attendance is below 96% and/or the child is regularly away from school due to illness. Failure to provide evidence when requested may result in the absences being recorded as unauthorised. Medical evidence can be in the form of a copy of a prescription, medication or an appointment card showing name of child and date they visited.
- If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition, evidence should be provided.
- At Eden Park and Preston a card will be provided for you to take to the Dr in order for you to gain medical evidence. Please ask the Dr's receptionist to stamp the card and date it to confirm your appointment. Then hand it in at school as your medical evidence.

## Unavoidable medical/dental appointments

- All routine (non emergency) appointments should be made, whenever possible, outside of school hours. Should a child need to have an appointment during school hours, such as in an emergency, hospital or CAMHS appointment, evidence of this will need to be provided. Failure to provide evidence may result in the school recording the absence as unauthorised. In this circumstance, children should be returned to school directly after the appointment.
- **Exceptional family circumstances such as a bereavement**
- **Days of religious observance**

## Rights, responsibilities and roles

### School:

1. All staff will understand the registration process in the school.
2. All registers will be completed accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and submitted. Registers will close at 9.10am and 1:05pm. After that all children will be recorded as late.
3. The school will ensure that clear attendance information about your child is regularly communicated to parents through a variety of media: the school's website, newsletters, emails, letters, texts and meetings.
4. The school will inform parents annually of the whole school attendance target. The yearly figure will also be given with the child's school report.
5. The school will accurately record and monitor all absenteeism and lateness via the school registration system. (See Appendix One)
6. The school will have clear procedures to identify and follow up all absence and lateness, allocating individual staff roles and responsibilities. (See Appendix Two)

Parents:

1. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child regularly attends the school at which they are registered. Help and support is available in school to ensure that this can be successful. Failure to fulfil this duty may result in the Local Authority taking legal action.
2. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
3. Parents are responsible for immediately informing school of the reason for any absence by phone call on the first morning of the absence and every morning thereafter.
4. Parents are not authorised to take their child on holidays in term time.

## Lateness

The school definitions and procedures for lateness are as follows:

- Pupils who arrive after 9.00 a.m. are considered 'Late' (L) and will be required to enter the school via Reception to sign in and record the reason for their late arrival. The Attendance Officer will monitor late arrivals regularly and look for any patterns.
- At Preston the children who are in the Nest Provision should be in school for 9.15, if they arrive after that they will get a late mark.
- Pupils who arrive after 9.30 a.m. should be considered as 'Late (after registers close)' (U).
- Staff will record the appropriate late mark on the BW register and these will be entered into the computerised attendance programme.
- All pupils' attendance records will be checked every week for "late" before registers close (L) and "late" after registers close (U).
- Where either/or these late arrivals cumulate to 3 or more in a half term the school will write to parents/carers of the pupil in question to discuss any support needs and ways of accessing support, such as use of school minibus pick up, walking bus place or the support of our Attendance Worker, family Support Worker or Pastoral Support.

## Term Time Holidays

**The national policy from the Department for Education states that as of the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

All absence requests forms will be considered on a case by case basis and only authorised where there are exceptional circumstances. The Head of School/Headteacher will determine the number of school days a pupil can be away from school if the leave is granted. This decision remains with the school at all times.

At Eden Park and Preston you can access the absence request form online on our school website. Our Attendance Team will reply to your request via email.

## Penalty notices

Where the decision has been made to unauthorise a request for leave of absence and the leave is still taken, the school may send in a request for the issuing of a Penalty Notice, to the Local Authority, who will then make the final decision about whether a Penalty Notice should be issued. Penalty Notices can also be used as a method to improve attendance when children have had a number of unauthorised absences within a six month period.

The Penalty Notice carries a penalty of £60 if paid in full within 21 days or £120 if paid in full after this time but within 28 days. The Local Authority are unable to accept part or late payments and there is no legal right to appeal the Penalty Notice once it has been issued. If a Penalty Notice goes unpaid, this is likely to result in Court proceedings being taken against you for an offence of failing to ensure regular school attendance contrary to section 444 Education Act 1996. If convicted, you may face a fine of up to £2500 and/or a maximum 3 months imprisonment.

**Please note:** only **one** Penalty Notice will be issued **in any two year period**. This means that if a Penalty Notice is paid, and the child accumulates a further 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (5 school days), this will result in the parent/carer receiving a summons to Court for an offence contrary to s444 Education Act. The matter **cannot** be dealt with by way of a further Penalty Notice being issued.

Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child. A 'parent' can be any person, whether a natural parent or not, who has care of the child or young person. This can also include parents who are estranged.

***If, at any time, a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences the school will consider the legal options available.*** Appendix One

[Procedures for reporting and following up absence/ lateness](#)

### **First day reporting (Eden Park and Preston)**

- Parents can find the various ways of reporting absence to the Attendance Team via the school websites.
- On every day of absence the parent/carer should ring/email/text school before 9:00 am to inform the offices that their child will be away and give a reason for the absence. An indication of the likely period of absence is requested.
- All children who arrive at either school after the register has closed at 9.00am will be given a late mark.
- The Attendance Team will conduct a school walk around as the registers are taken and absences for each class will be recorded by the class staff on a board on the classroom door. Cross checks will be made with any messages received and any family who hasn't left a message will be contacted. If we cannot contact you on any numbers which are on your contact list we may decide to do a home visit. We will always leave a school calling card to let you know that we have made a visit. If we have cause for concern we may report this in to Children's Services or ask the Police to do a welfare check.
- A child may be reported as "missing in education" if no contact has been made for up to 10 days, this includes sending this information to the Local Authority. If we are concerned about the child's welfare we will always do this sooner.

## Cockington

Parents are reminded of the first day contact procedure at the beginning of each term via the school newsletter.

- On the first day of any absence the parent/carer should ring school before 09:30am to inform the school that their child will be absent from school and give a reason for that absence. An indication of the likely period of absence is to be requested.
- Admin staff keep a log of absence calls and reasons received each day.
- Immediately after registration, class teachers send their registers to the office.
- If any member of staff is concerned about an absence, the concerns will be raised with attendance/administrative staff to clarify any reasons or knowledge of the absence. If there are still concerns they will relay to the Assistant Head of Learning.
- Between 09:30am – 10:30am attendance/administrative staff will phone the parents/carers of any pupil whose absence remains unexplained.
- If a child is not in school and no contact can be made with parents or with other contacts, a member of staff may undertake a home visit to check on the wellbeing of your child.
- If after 10 school days, the child has continued unauthorised absence, a Child Missing Education (CME) referral will be made to the Attendance Improvement Service.

***If the child is subject to a child protection plan or if the school has particular safeguarding concerns and feel the child is at risk of immediate harm, the school will immediately notify the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) without waiting for 10 schools days.***

---

### Appendix Two

---

#### Attendance Letter sequence

All pupils' with attendance below 96% will be examined every week by the Attendance Officer and Pastoral team, in order to identify persistent absentees and those pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees.

The following actions may be taken:

**Attendance letter 1** will be sent advising the parent that their child's attendance has dropped below 96%.

**Attendance letter 2** will be sent within 2 weeks after letter 1 or later in the same academic year if attendance has not improved, offering parents/carers a consultation with our Attendance Team. At this stage school will be unable to unauthorise any further absences without medical evidence. At the meetings we will offer parents a parenting contract as per the local authority's request.

**Attendance letter 3** will be sent inviting parents/carers to a meeting with the Attendance Team. In the case of unauthorised absences. If this is not attended nor received any communications from the Parent/Career it will be referred to the local authority. If the meeting is attended we will work along side the family to insure that attendance is improved.

**If** the attendance has still not improved from the attendance meeting and signage of the parental contract then the school will referral to the local authority.

Lates

Warning letters would be sent to parent/career in the event of constant lates. Once warning letter has been sent if they accumulate 5 u codes then they will be reffered to the local authority for a penalty notice

### Strategies for promoting attendance

Cockington

- Attendance Assembly termly and weekly celebrations in awards assembly
- Individuals and classes are rewarded for attendance and punctuality
- Prizes are awarded to encourage positive attendance
- Letters are sent home to acknowledge improved attendance

Eden Park/Preston

- Letters and text alerts sent to parents if attendance falls below 96%
- Attendance awards presented in assemblies
- Class attendance celebrated in weekly newsletters