Attendance Policy including EYFS

**Introduction**
- We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Attendance at school is compulsory and the right of every child enrolled at Essendene Lodge School. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.
- In the Early Years we allow children a settling in period as well option for morning and/or afternoons sessions based on the needs of the child.
- Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the school is responsible for making sure it keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

**Definitions**

**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 or guardian for example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the headteacher can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

**Unauthorised absence** - An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission as the parent or guardian have not given a legitimate reason for absence. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

**If a child is absent**
- When a child is absent without explanation the office will contact the parent or carer after registration closes. This usually 8.45am for main school and 9.00am for Pre-School.
- When the child returns to school, a note/email should be sent from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.
- A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment to gain an authorised absence.

**Requests for leave of absence**
- We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child, e.g. a special event, family emergency etc. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance and fill out a holiday request form.
- We naturally prefer parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods, but if this is not possible, the headteacher may grant the leave of absence dependent on child’s...
attendance record and number of leaves requested within one academic year. The Headteacher has the right to refuse authorised absences if it is deemed that the absence will hinder the child's progress within that academic year.

**Long-term absence**

- When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over seven working days, **this will be classified as long term absence**. The school may work in partnership with the parents and send some work home dependent on the illness (*If the illness is contagious, no school materials will be sent home.*)
- If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence Essendene Lodge will arrange a programme of work and will liaise closely with the family to support the child's learning.
- **Children in Early Years** will not require additional work and can return to normal attendance when fit and healthy again.

**Monitoring and review**

- Daily absence lists are sent to and monitored by office staff. Any pattern of absence is noted in the school log and parents are asked to explain any obvious pattern.
- The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately.
- Where staff feel that significant absences may have impinged on learning they will record this on the School Report.
- Attendance for the period of the whole academic year will be recorded on the annual school report with the exception of Pre-School reports.
- Persistent absence will be followed up by the headteacher- through meeting with the parents to ascertain reasons so that support can be offered. A letter will be also be sent home when more than ten school days are missed and/or a child is regularly absent.
- Admissions/ departures at non-standard times can happen but the school will notify the local authority as part of our statutory duty.

**Lateness to School**

- We believe at Essendene Lodge that regular punctual attendance is vital for effective learning. There is a clear link between attendance and academic achievement.
- The school opens at 8.30am and we ask that all children are present to line up with their class as soon as the bell rings. This is an important time of the day for pupils as the learning starts as soon as the register is taken at 8.35am. Pre-School children may go directly to their class.
- Our pupils are encouraged to begin to take personal responsibility as soon as possible. Arriving late leaves pupils at a disadvantage in terms of their learning and very little time to prepare for the day ahead.
- If a child is late for school, parents must sign the Late Book. The cut off point for this is 8.35am except in Pre-School where it is 8.45am. The use of the Late Book ensures that we can keep track of the number of pupils within the premises should we have an emergency situation e.g. fire.
- If a child is not signed into the late book, it will be registered as an unauthorised absence and recorded on any official documents e.g. reports/ school records.
- If a child is persistently late for 5 times in any one term, the headteacher shall contact the parent by letter.
- If a child continues to be late and the number of days reaches 10 times in any one term, the headteacher will set up a meeting with the parents to help overcome difficulties.

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Mrs K Ali Headteacher