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# Harold Court Primary School

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**HEAD TEACHER: Mrs. Hogan-O'Neill**

POLICY ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Promoting Regular Attendance**

The law states that it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure a child attends school regularly and on time.

Each child is expected, by the Department of Education to achieve **96%** attendance or above each academic year. In order to achieve this figure, pupils cannot be absent for any reason for more than 8 days a year.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is important to enable the child to take full advantage of the educational opportunities and ensure academic progress.

### Attendance Percentage Breakdown

<b>Above 98%</b>	<b>Excellent Attendance</b>
Pupils with attendance above 98% have had less than 4 days absence in the year.	
<b>95%</b>	<b>Average Attendance</b>
Pupils with attendance above 95% have had less than 9 days absence in a year.	
<b>90%</b>	<b>Below Average / Low Attendance</b>
Pupils with below 90% are missing 4 weeks of school per year; it will be difficult for them to maintain workloads, and they may drop one attainment grade.	
<b>Below 90%</b>	<b>Persistent Absence</b>
Pupils with attendance below 90% are deemed to be Persistently Absent from School, and will be referred to the Local Authority Attendance Service.	

## School Hours

School starts at

Registers close at

Pupils arriving after this time will be issued with an L code (Late mark)

All pupils after 9.30am issued with U code (unauthorised)

8.50am

9.00am -

## Absence Procedures

If a child is unfit for school, the parent/carer should contact the school on the first day, in person, by email or telephone our absence line and leave a message with child's name, class and brief explanation of the reason for their absence. This must be repeated every day the child is absent from school. When the child is fit to return to school, absences will not be authorised without a valid reason. If the child is absent without notification from the parent/carer then we will use our first day calling process.

The information below outlines the procedures that the office staff follow every morning after registers close at 9am. This is carried out diligently and promptly to ensure all children are safe.

1. *Registers closed by 9:00am.*
  2. *Office staff then check absence line and emails.*
  3. *Staff start first day calling for those children absent without explanation (minimum two calls to contact list)*
  4. *Text message is sent if no response*
- Once staff make contact, 'first day calling' process is stopped.**
5. ***In the event of no response, a prompt home visit is made by two members of senior staff. A letter explaining that staff have visited will be left at the home address.***
  6. ***If no response at home address staff will refer immediately to Children's Services/Police - and request a welfare visit.***

Note: Any absences for five days or more, we can request medical evidence. This also applies if the child is regularly absent from school where parents are reporting their child is ill. The absence will be registered unauthorised, until medical proof has been seen. Where possible it is advised that medical appointments should be made out of school hours and during non-term time.

Unauthorised absences are those that the school considers unreasonable, e.g. minor ailments, truancy, excessive lateness, shopping and holidays taken in term time etc. If the reason given is not an acceptable explanation and with no proof, this will be logged as unauthorised. If a child has Persistent Absenteeism the school has the right to contact the LA (Local authority) and the **EWO** (Educational

welfare officer) they will then investigate and this can result in a fixed penalty notice, to be paid to the LA.

## **Punctuality**

The school gates open at 8.40am however the school day officially starts at 8:50am. Registers are marked by 9.00am and your child will receive a late mark and log number of minutes, if they arrive after 9am.

After 9.30am the **U** code (Unauthorised) will be used and we will require a reason for lateness.

## **Holidays**

Under the new DFE legislation as from 1st September 2013, Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Family holidays are not regarded as exceptional circumstances; therefore any absence taken for holiday will be subject to a fixed penalty notice.

1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 fines will be as follows:

**£60 per child to each parent if paid within 21 days**

**£120 per child to each parent if paid within 28 days**

Again, please note that we will require evidence if the child is ill prior or after holiday, also if the child is not back to school due to a flight delay or cancellation. Please do not ask your child to give different reasons for their absence in order not to report a holiday as this puts all parties in an unfair position.

## **Informing parents**

We monitor attendance within the academic year (September to July.) A summary of a child's attendance record is attached to the Annual report. If a child's attendance is shown to be giving us a cause of concern, a letter will be written to the parents informing them of this. This early alert can prevent further action being made. Often parents can be unaware that a few days absent can soon add up and your child's attendance will start to fall below the required **96%**.