



Attendance Policy



CURRENT

APPROVED – NOVEMBER 2017
REVIEW – NOVEMBER 2019
PERSON RESPONSIBLE – HEADTEACHER

Statement of intent

- The aim of this policy is to outline the school's policy and procedures with regard to the attendance of children who are recorded as being on the school roll.
- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational and social progress.
- We aim to work together with parent/carers to ensure that all children registered at our school attend both regularly and punctually.
- Procedures in this policy take in to consideration statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education, (DFE) and LA.
- The school has an expectation of 100% attendance, unless authorised

Roles and Responsibilities

The law requires children aged 5 – 16 years to attend school on a daily basis.

Parents'/ Carers' Responsibilities

1. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school every day. An aggravated offence of poor school attendance may result in a fine of £2,500 and up to 3 months imprisonment.
2. Parents/carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason, such as sickness, they should contact the school as soon as possible, preferably on the first morning of absence. This should be done by phone or in person.

We follow the advice from the Health Protection Agency and adhere to the 48 hour rule at Hillside Primary School. This means if a child/adult vomits or has diarrhoea then they must have 48 hours clear of symptoms before returning to school.

3. Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents/carers. (Should there fail to be a satisfactory reason supplied the child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.)
4. The doors open at 8.50 am. Parents should ensure their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration at 8.55 am. If a child arrives after 9.00 am his/her parent carer should accompany them to the school office.
5. Any child arriving after class registers close at 9.05am will be classed as late. Children arriving after 9.30am will be entered as U unless they have been to a medical appointment.
If a child has a persistent late record parent/carers will be asked into school to meet with the Attendance Officer to resolve the problem.
6. Parent/carers can approach school staff at any time for support if they are having problems getting children to school regularly and on time.

7. Parents should avoid booking holidays/leave of absence during term time. In line with Government guidelines, absences during term time will only be granted for 'exceptional circumstances' **to the child**; holidays DO NOT qualify as 'exceptional circumstances'. If there is an exceptional circumstance, a request must be made to the Headteacher at least three weeks in advance of the leave of absence requested. A leave of absence request form is available from the main office. The matter will then be discussed with the parents/carers.

An 'exceptional circumstance' **TO THE CHILD** could be:-

- A bereavement of a close family member.
- A family needs to be together because of a traumatic event.
- Visiting seriously ill relative- end of life imminent.
- Work, the nature of the work does not allow for them to go in the school holidays, this would be supported by a letter from the employer.
- A parent/carer is in the armed forces.

If a holiday or a leave of absence is taken in term time which has not been authorised, a Penalty Notice may be issued. The Penalty Notice is for £60, for each parent of each child (whether or not they are birth parents), if paid within 21 days, and £120 if paid after this date but within 28 days. Repeated unauthorised term-time holidays may result in prosecution. In such cases the Headteacher will give consideration to requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued to the parents by the LA, in line with the agreed Kirklees Code of Conduct. Penalty Notices have now replaced prosecution in cases where Headteachers consider that parents are failing in their duty to ensure the regular attendance of their children at school. The school recognises, however, that this sanction is only to be used as a last resort and that all parties will work together positively to ensure that children attend school regularly in order to achieve their best.

8. If parents take their child out of school on an unauthorised absence, on their return to school, they can request work that their child has missed, if this is appropriate to be completed at home.

Consequences of Unauthorised Leave

1. The possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued (to each parent for each child).
2. The possibility of losing the school place, and the likelihood of being re-admitted to the school.
3. The possibility of prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for repeat offences of unauthorised leave of absence.
4. The possibility of a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record.

Teachers' responsibilities

1. Teachers are responsible for marking the register twice a day, at the start of the morning and afternoon session.
2. Teachers will mark children present, but will leave an N (no reason yet provided for absence) if the child is not present. The Attendance Officer will fill in the rest, using the agreed LA codes to record reasons for any absence.
3. Teachers will emphasise any issues arising from frequent absences and/or lateness at consultation evenings.

4. Teachers are not required to provide children on unauthorised absences with work to complete whilst not in school.

Attendance Officer's responsibilities

1. The Attendance Officer will contact parent/carers on the first day of absence if school has not received any contact by 9.20 am.
2. A record will be kept of persistent lateness, including times and reasons. These will be communicated to the Headteacher on at least a weekly basis, but usually daily. If there are any concerns, the parent/carer will be invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officers in a letter which outlines the concerns.
3. If absence levels reach 10%, each case will be discussed with the Headteacher on a weekly basis, and if it is deemed appropriate, a letter outlining the percentage of attendance will be sent to parent/carers, which also outlines how important it is to attend school. An interview with the parent/carer may also be requested.
4. Absence figures will be produced for each Governing Body meeting, together with a breakdown of reasons for non-attendance.
5. School may be able to assist in the transportation of pupils if this is an issue, but this is not a regular service, and only offered in exceptional circumstances.
6. The Attendance Officer will liaise with the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer regarding individual unauthorised absences of 10%, and in the monitoring of the registers.
7. The Attendance Officer will deal with all other outside agencies such as the Missing in Education Team, Housing Support and School Nurse, to ensure that children attend school.

The Headteacher

1. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that registers are completed correctly and stored appropriately.
2. The Headteacher will ensure that the school's policy and procedures for ensuring attendance at school will be communicated to parents and other interested parties through the school prospectus and at least termly reminders in the school newsletter.
3. The Headteacher will meet weekly with the Attendance Officer to discuss any attendance/lateness issues, and the way forward with these.
4. The Headteacher will ensure that all local authority parents' leaflets will be sent to all new parent/carers.