

Prospect Hill Infant and Nursery School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Agreed By Governors: Spring Term 2018

Review Date: Spring Term 2019

Signed: Chair of Governors

Signed: Head Teacher

***Due regard has been given to equality
legislation when updating this policy***

Prospect Hill Infant & Nursery School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

- Our aim is to help your child reach their full potential by attending school on time, every day
- It is important that children learn the importance of attending school and being punctual as part of their preparation for adult life
- We are committed to working with parents and carers to ensure that all of our children achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and good punctuality

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to

- set out the ways by which attendance and punctuality are managed by the school
- clarify the role of the parents/carers

School Responsibilities:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority
- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and their presence is valued
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality using newsletters and other communications to parent/carers
- Encourage parent/carers to fully support the policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education
- Encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored and absences are followed up promptly
- Telephone parents/emergency contacts of children who do not arrive at school on time or are absent, where the school has not received information of their absence
- Follow the children missing in education referral process where applicable
- Meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence
- Ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality
- Ensure information is available for Governors, Parents/Carers and Senior management Team/Staff
- Develop incentives/rewards for good attendance and punctuality

Parent/Carer Responsibilities:

- Support the school in aiming for excellent attendance levels
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day and is ready in the class room to begin work at 8.50am
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made
- Notify the school when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of the absence, before 9.30am
- Notify the school before 9.30am after the first day of absence to advise the school if the absence is continuing

- Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- Wherever possible arrange medical, dental and other appointments outside of the school day
- Inform the school of attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen
- To work in partnership with the school and other agencies to improve the child's attendance if necessary

Registers

Class teachers complete the register twice daily and record the class attendance number and return it to the office. Mrs Berridge and Mrs Cavell keep records through the SIMs Attendance Module and will code the absence.

The gates are locked at 8.55am. All children arriving after this time must come to the main entrance, sign the late book and give a valid reason for being late.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absences can be authorised if they are for certain reasons e.g. sickness, religious observance, absence following the death of a close member of the family.

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Head teacher. If the Head teacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

An absence will be classified as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- The child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat
- A child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child arrives after the register is closed without a satisfactory explanation
- Any other reason for absence that had not been agreed as an exceptional absence

Holidays/Unauthorised absence

If the number of any unauthorised absences reaches the threshold set by the local authority, current legislation states that a fixed penalty may be issued.

Legislation also states that Head Teachers cannot authorise any leave during school unless there are exceptional circumstances

It states that holidays are not seen to be exceptional. In conjunction with the Worksop Family of Schools, holidays will not be authorised during term time.

The legislation also includes procedures for issuing fixed penalty notices to each parent who fails to ensure that their child attends school. As of December 2017, the fine will be £60 per parent, if paid within 21 days, or £120 per parent, if paid within 28 days.

In cases of repeated unauthorised absence in term time this may lead to an immediate prosecution through the magistrates' court.

If the leave of absence is exceptional, a form is to be completed (see appendix 1) giving at least 2 months' notice, to be returned to school for approval by the Governing Body. If the request is approved, the governing body will determine how many days to authorise.

Punctuality

The school day for full-time children begins at 8.50 am when the register will be taken. The gates are opened at 8.40am and children are expected to be in their class ready for the school day to start promptly at 8.50am.

Children arriving after 8.55 am should report to the school office, because the gates are locked by this time.

Parents/Carers of children where lateness becomes a concern, they will be approached and reminded of these times and their obligation to comply. It will be explained that the lateness not only interrupts their child's education but also that of others in the class.

If a child arrives after 9.20am, with no acceptable reason given by their parent, this will constitute an unauthorised absence.

If Parents/Carers know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know.

In rare circumstances where the school is made aware of a situation, an arrangement allowing a degree of flexibility can be agreed with the Head teacher.

Medical Appointments

Parents/Carers must sign their child(ren) out and back in again when attending appointments during the school day.

Monitoring

Attendance is monitored closely at school and where there is cause for concern, i.e. when attendance is below 95% in any term, the reasons for this will be investigated and where appropriate, the school will follow strict procedures to ensure an improvement in attendance.

School may communicate any concerns to parent/carers via the following methods

- informal meeting
- communication at parents' evening
- Letters
- formal meeting
- Telephone call/ Text message
- Home visit

The Head teacher and The School Administrator/Attendance Officer will meet with the Governing Body termly to report attendance figures/analysis and any attendance issues

The Head teacher will keep the Governors informed about attendance matters, in the termly report to the Governing Body using agreed informative format.

All staff will be expected to comply with the policy

It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of absence to the Dfe and to the governing body

Strategies to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Attendance and Punctuality

- All new parents/carers are introduced to information on attendance in the School in their welcome pack and the policy is published on the website
- Up to date attendance leaflet issued to parents/carers at the beginning of the school year
- Individual parents/carers are approached where there is concern about their child's attendance or punctuality
- All unexplained absences will be followed up and a reason expected
- Expectation that all children to be in the classroom ready to work at 8.50am. Registration begins at 8.50am
- Each child's attendance data sheet with traffic light report will be given to parents/carers at parents' evenings
- Each child's attendance data sheet will be enclosed with child's annual school report
- Reward systems are in place for individuals and classes and reviewed regularly

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Request for Absence – Exceptional Circumstances

December 2017



Prospect Hill Infant & Nursery School
& Prospect Hill Junior School



Changes to Holiday allowances from 1st September 2013

Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing to inform you of changes made by the Department of Education to requests for holidays in term time. The new legislation will come into force from 1st September 2013.

The new amendments state that Head Teachers cannot authorise any leave during school time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It very clearly states that holidays are **not** seen to be exceptional. It has been agreed by all Head Teachers in Worksop that NO holidays will be authorised during term time. This is because ...

Going to school every day means:

- ✓ **Better life chances for your child**
- ✓ **Building lasting friendships**
- ✓ **Taking part in exciting activities**
- ✓ **Being able to reach their full potential**
- ✓ **Developing a love of learning**
- ✓ **Receiving certificates & rewards for attendance for themselves, and their class**

If you feel your request for leave is exceptional, then you will need to complete the attached form. This will need to be returned to school for approval by the Governing Body. Please note you will need to give at least 2 months' notice. If the request is approved by the Governors, then we will determine how many days to authorise.

The amendment also includes procedures for issuing fixed penalty notices (fines) to EACH parent who fails to ensure their child attends school. The fine will be £60/parent, if paid within 21 days, or £120/parent, if paid within 28 days. This brings the fixed penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices & allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

If, after having read all this, you still decided to take your school on holiday then please note

- It will be recorded as unauthorised
- You may incur a fixed penalty notice
- A referral to Target Support may be made

If you wish to find out more you can visit:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments>

Thank you for your continued support.

Ms R Lumb
Junior School Head Teacher

Mrs Louise Rose
Infant School Head Teacher



Prospect Hill Infant & Nursery School
& Prospect Hill Junior School



Request for Absence - Exceptional Circumstances

If having considered all the above you still wish to request authorisation for leave of absence for **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances during term time, please complete this form and return to the School Office at least 2 months before the planned event.

School Infant/Junior (please delete)

Child's name Class

Absence from (last day in school) _____ to (1st day back in school) _____

Total number of school days requested _____.

Explain in detail why you think the request is **exceptional**

Signed _____ (Parent/Carer) Date _____

Copy to be returned to parent/Carer after consideration by Governing Body.

Child's name _____ Class _____

Current Attendance Rate _____

Planned absence from _____ to _____

Date request received Date of discussion with Governing Body

Request approved & number of days authorised _____

Request declined for following reason:

If leave of absence taken number of days unauthorised _____

Signed _____ Head Teacher (on behalf of the Governors)