

**The Honley Schools
Partnership**

Brockholes CE (C) School



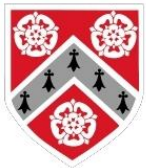
Helme C of E School



Honley CE (VC) J, I & N School



Honley High School



Meltham CE Primary School



Meltham Moor Primary School



Netherton I & N School



South Crossland CE Junior School



Honley Partnership Attendance Policy

Updated November 2017

Honley Partnership Attendance Policy

The partnership is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students. It recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting regular school attendance and excellent punctuality so that all young people take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on excellent attendance.

Aim

To promote a culture where excellent attendance and punctuality are seen as a fundamental requirement for all learners.

Objectives

To have systems and procedures in place that:

- Encourage attendance and punctuality to school and lessons
- Inform parents/carers of absences and involve them in any attendance concerns for their children
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
- To promote effective partnerships with the Attendance and Pupil Support Service and with any other relevant services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Further Reference

Appendix A - Attendance guidance for parents and carers

Appendix B - Term time absence

Appendix C - Application form for pupil leave of absence from school

Appendix D – First Day Calling Procedure

Appendix A – Attendance Guidance for Parents and Carers

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring every child's regular attendance at school is the parents'/carers' responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE and helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Report to parent/carers at least termly on their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor whole school attendance continuously.
- Celebrate good attendance.
- Make sure parents/carers have access to attendance data.
- Recognise good or improving attendance.

2 UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

2.1 Every half day absence from school is classified by the school (not by the parents) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Absences for religious observance will also be authorised.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the school issuing sanctions and/or initiating legal proceedings through the Local Authority. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Any absence not approved by the school.

2.2 PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are automatically made known to the Local Authority.

3 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

3.1 If a child is absent parents/carers must:

- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Report reason for continued absence;

3.2 If a child is absent school will:

- Contact parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them.
- Inform their Social Worker of the absence if the child is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan or is a Looked After Child.
- Invite parents/carers in to school to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer, pastoral staff and/or Headteacher if absences persist.

4 TELEPHONE NUMBERS

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have contact numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

5 LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class or teacher, getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

- Children will receive a late mark if they are not in registration.

- All children arriving after registration period will be required to sign in in the office. The reason for lateness is also recorded.

If a child has a persistent late record parents/carers will be asked in to school to meet with a member of staff to resolve the problem, but parents/carers can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting children to school on time.

6 HONLEY PARTNERSHIP ATTENDANCE OFFICER

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problem together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer to the Honley Partnership Attendance Officer. He/She will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Attendance Officer may apply to the Local Authority to impose sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

The table below is a guide to indicate what may happen when a student's attendance falls below a certain percentage. Previous attendance history and the time of the year will be taken into consideration.

First day absence	Phone call home
90-95% attendance	Letter home Parental interview Action plan and set targets Attendance Officer involvement
Below 90% attendance	Further letter home Further parental interview Further Attendance Officer involvement Use of Action Plan/Parenting Contract Warning letter from Attendance Officer Fixed Penalty Notice

7 SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. All school staff are committed to working in partnership with parents, children and families to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix B – Term Time Absence

It is well recognised that good, consistent attendance at school is crucial to a child or young person's future prospects and reducing absence from school continues to be a priority for the Honley Partnership. Reflecting national concerns around attendance, the Department for Education issued revised guidance in November 2016 strengthening the view that as a general rule, children should not be taken out of school:

"Headteachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for the headteacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday."

Exceptional circumstances may for example be when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

All requests from parents for absence must be made in writing to the school in advance of any travel arrangements being made (see the flow chart overleaf) and at least two weeks prior to the absence, using the leave of absence form which is available from the school office/website. The request should be sent for the attention of the headteacher and outline the specific reasons why the request meets the requirements of "exceptional circumstances".

The school will not authorise absences which are requested for the following reasons:

- availability of cheap holidays;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

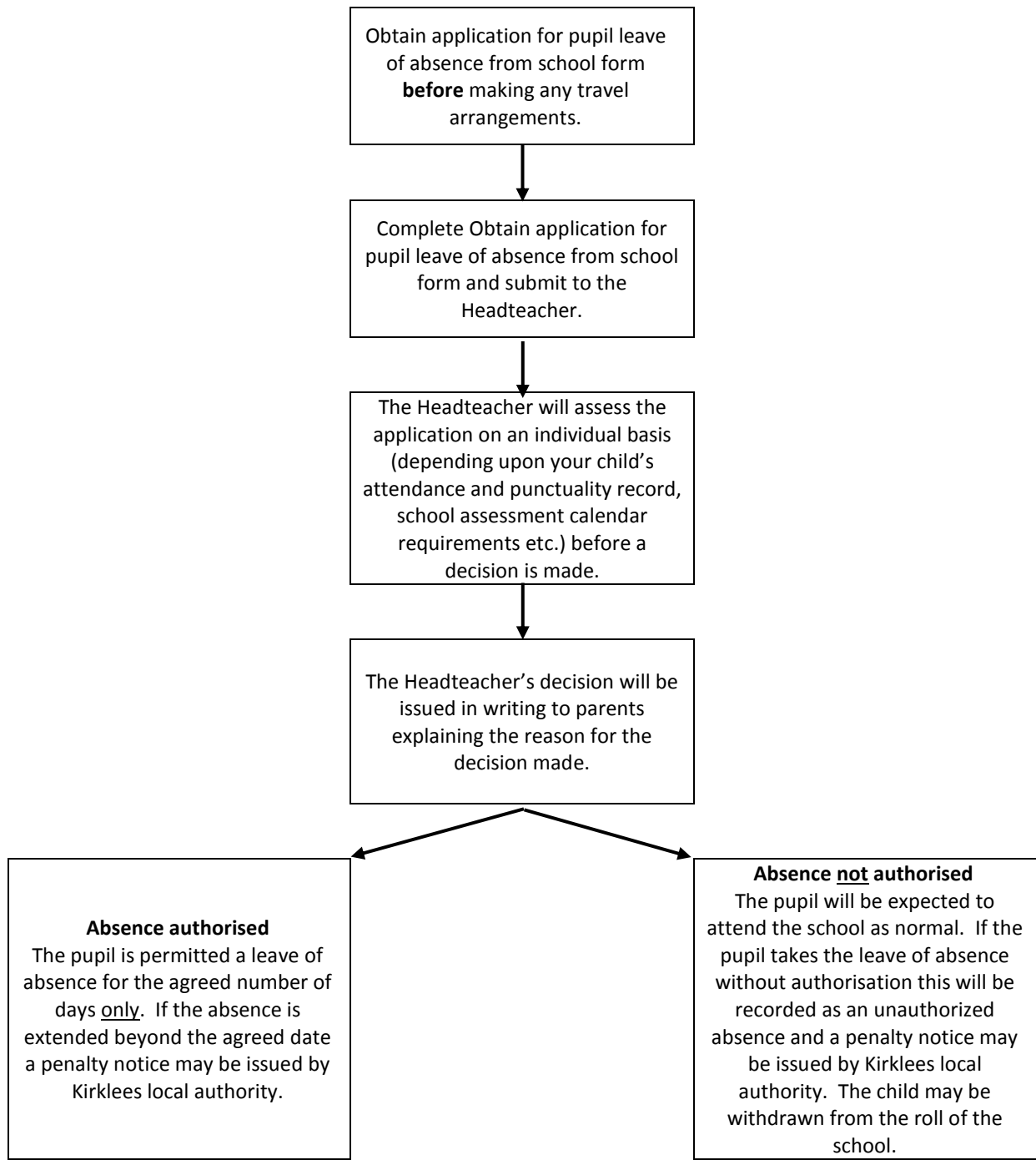
The head teacher will determine if the request is reasonable. Unless there are exceptional circumstances the school will not approve any absence:

- For any Key Stage 4 students (years 10 and 11).
- Any student in full time education where current attendance is less than 95%.
- Statutory exam periods.
- In the month of September

Where parents / carers take children out of school without proper authorisation, the schools may respond as follows:

- The absence will be treated as unauthorised and recorded on school's Integris system.
- Parents can be given a Kirklees Penalty Notice or prosecuted for periods of unauthorised absence.
- In certain circumstances, the school may delete pupils from the register who fail to return on the date they were expected back in school.
- Parents who repeatedly take their children on unauthorised leave of absences may be directly prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty, a parent will have a criminal record and face a fine of up to £1,000.

Summary of the application process for pupil leave of Absence (due to exceptional circumstances in term-time)



Penalty notices:

- are issued to each individual parent of each child not in school
- are £60 provided they are paid within 21 days of issue
- increase to £120 if they are not paid within 21 days of issue but before 28 days have expired
- failure to comply with a penalty notice may result in formal legal action by Kirklees Children & Young People Service (if upheld this may result of a fine of up to £2500 for each parent of each child not in school)

Appendix C - Honley CE(VC) Junior, Infant and Nursery School

Application for Pupil Leave of absence from school

The school is expected to comply with Government guidance by the DfE (Department for Education) and the LA (Local Authority).

Pupil Name:		Class:
Any other school age children:	Name:	School:
Absent from school date:		Back at school date:
Total amount of days absent from school:		
Does the absence overlap with beginning or end of term? Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>		
Please state your reason for the absence:		
Signature of Parent/Carer:		Date:
<p>The Headteacher will consider the following points before authorising leave:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The child's attendance history (above or below 95%) 2. The time of year (Controlled Tests, Exams or September) 3. The length and purpose of the absence <p>Penalty Notice: Where the Headteacher decides that authorisation cannot be given but the absence occurs, consideration will be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice in line with Kirklees Code of Conduct or there is a possibility that your child may be taken off the school roll.</p>		
<p>Office use only: Current attendance % Number of late marks Number of days requested Would granting this request mean attendance would fall below 95%</p>		Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Office use only: Signature:</p>		Authorised: <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorised: <input type="checkbox"/>
Reasons:		

Each request can only be judged on a case by case basis, you will receive a reply from the school in writing.

Appendix D – First Day Calling Procedure

When a child is absent

- 1) Class registers completed on Integris G2 and saved by 9.10am
- 2) Late children signed in at the office and entered onto the system
- 3) Absence calls, emails checked
- 4) First day text via Groupcall or telephone call, to primary contacts
- 5) If no response ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted
- 6) Contact other site if sibling is involved
- 7) Alert someone on Senior Management Team that this child is absent and no contact
- 8) Senior Management Team to risk assess a home visit.
- 9) Home visit to be made following decision where possible by school staff or any other agency involved with the child. School staff should attend in a pair. Liaise with other site if sibling involved.
- 10) Contact Police to initiate a “safe and well” check if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child. This should be done using the 101 number by a Safeguarding Lead.