



**Huntington
Community Primary School**

Attendance Policy

May 2019

Rationale

Full attendance is enormously beneficial if pupils are to take full advantage of school and develop the skills which will equip them for life. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less well than their peers, at both primary level and later. Children should attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year in order to receive their educational entitlement.

Huntington Community Primary School aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy through which staff, pupils, parents, governors and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

Aims

- To create a culture in which full attendance is the norm.
- To demonstrate to pupils, parents, governors and staff that the school values good attendance and recognises that such attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To value the individual and to be socially and educationally inclusive.

Objectives

- To implement a consistent framework of rewards and sanctions.
- To enhance the children's understanding of the importance of regular attendance, through regular discussion and the celebration of outstanding attendance through the award of certificates and prizes.
- To emphasise the importance of regular school attendance to parents, through newsletters, the school website and published policy, and by making personal contact with those families for whom attendance is an issue.
- To promote an effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service by meeting twice a year to monitor attendance, and by contacting the service should any concerns arise between such visits

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Registration of Pupils

- Children are expected in the playground for 08:50, at which time the school bell will sound and they should move to their lines for collection by the teaching staff.
- Teaching staff take class registers at the start of every morning and afternoon session, by 09:00 and 13:05 respectively.
- Registers provide a twice daily record of the attendance of all pupils. They should be marked in black ink, using the symbols advised by the DfE and CWAC, with any alterations clearly visible and explained – *Tippex* or similar products should not be used. They are legal documents that may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school.

Lateness

School begins at 08:50 and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration by this time. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of other children. Persistent lateness is a cause for concern and, in such circumstances, the headteacher will take action, which may include contacting the Education Welfare Service.

- A child arriving after the register has been taken by the teacher will be recorded as late (code L) until 09:30.
- The register is officially closed at 09:30, after which pupils arriving will be coded as U.

Absence

- Absence is recorded legally either as **authorised** (approved by school) or **unauthorised** (not approved by school).
- It is expected that parents will provide an explanation if their child is absent. This should be received before 9:30am on the first day the absence occurs and, where possible, give some indication as to when the child is expected to return.
- If school has not been informed of an absence by 9:30am, administration staff will try to contact the family and keep a record of the steps they have taken to locate absent children – this include pupil names, year group, classroom checks, checks with siblings, times of phone calls made home, reasons for absence and if any further action is required.
- Children with 100% attendance over the course of the school year will receive a reward and certificate at the end of the summer term.
- If the reason for absence cannot be established, because a child's parents cannot be contacted, the school will refer the case to the Education Welfare Service after 10 days, or sooner at the discretion of the headteacher.

Persistent Absenteeism

The following procedure will be adhered to in order that persistent absenteeism does not develop:

- Identification of pupils whose attendance is giving cause for concern will be made by the class teacher and/or administrative staff.
- Concerns will be passed to the head teacher.
- The head teacher will contact parents by letter, informing them of the concerns and reinforcing the parental duty to ensure full school attendance.
- Following the letter, there will be four weeks' monitoring of the child's attendance.
- In cases where attendance shows improvement over the four week period, attendance will still be monitored for a reasonable period of time to ensure that the improvement is sustained.
- If there is no improvement by the end of the monitoring period, a second letter will be sent and parents may be invited to a meeting in school.
- If attendance has not improved and it is deemed appropriate to issue a final warning letter, the Education Welfare Service will be notified; parents must be informed of this.
- The referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parents and a print out of the child's attendance certificate.

Leave of Absence (including term-time holidays)

Parents requesting *Leave of Absence* for any reason other than medical must complete a request form and submit it at least two weeks in advance. All such leave is at the head teacher's discretion and, if granted, will be for exceptional circumstances only. These may include:

- Armed Forces leave
- Family crisis (Child in Care, adoption, bereavement, severe medical needs)
- Important religious observances (only the day/s of the event, & reasonable travelling time, not extended leave)
- Urgent medical appointments (routine appointments should be made outside of school hours)
- Occupational purposes (e.g. modelling or stage performances, as long as it can be proved that the education of the child will not suffer).

Circumstances specifically identified by the DfE as NOT to be authorised include:

- Extended family holidays
- One day trips to see relatives
- Birthday or event holidays
- "Educational" visits
- Holidays to long haul destinations

As a consequence, **term-time holidays will not generally be authorised.**

If leave of absence is authorised then a date to return must be agreed with the Head Teacher. A child who is absent longer than the 5 days after the agreed date can be legally removed from the school register and the parent liable for prosecution.

Fines for Unauthorised Absence

If a leave of absence is unauthorised, a fixed penalty notice will be issued. The current rates payable by parents are £60 per parent per child where the payment is paid within 21 days and £120 where the amount is paid with 28 days. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid this could lead to prosecution in the Magistrate's Court.

Policy Review

Committee responsible for Review: Premises and Health & Safety Committee

Regularity of Review: every 3 years

Signed: Chair of Governors

Signed: Headteacher

Date of Premises and Health & Safety Committee approval: May 1st, 2019

Next review date: May 2022

Appendix 1

REQUEST FOR *LEAVE OF ABSENCE*

- From September 1st 2013, **the law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.**
- Any applications for *Leave of Absence* must be in **exceptional circumstances**, and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant its granting.
- Parents can be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

This form must be completed to request authorisation for any *Leave of Absence*, and submitted at least two weeks prior to its commencement. Such authorisation is at the headteacher's discretion, and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances (which will NOT include, for example, availability of cheap holidays/accommodation, better weather or overlap with the beginning/end of term).

✂-----

I request permission for my child (insert name/s).....
in class/es.....
to obtain *Leave of Absence* from to

Total number of school days

The **exceptional reason** for the absence is

.....
.....

Signed Parent/Carer Date

~~~~~

The Headteacher gives authorisation for the above absence from school

The Headteacher is unable to authorise the above request for absence

Signed ..... (Headteacher)      Date .....