

ATTENDANCE POLICY

OUR SCHOOL VISION

At Haresfield Church of England Primary School we want everyone to know that they are unique, special and worthy in the sight of God and to "Aim High". To be the very best that they can be. We strive to achieve this through our Christian values rooted curriculum. By working together to learn what God wants for each of us, we offer an ambitious, creative curriculum in which we help each child to flourish and grow. . We endeavour to provide the children in our care with a passion for learning and to appreciate the wonder of our world. When they leave our school our aim is to ensure they have the key skills ready to cope with life at whatever level they are. The school is supported by an effective partnership with parents and the community.

RATIONALE

Haresfield C of E Primary School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all students are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

Under Section 1999 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where s/he is a registered pupil. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Improving attendance at Haresfield School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community, including pupils, parents and staff.

Pupils

All pupils are expected to attend their lessons regularly and punctually.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible, either in writing, which is preferred, or by telephone call. A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parents.

Parents will be informed promptly, by the Head teacher, of any concerns that may arise over a child's attendance.

Parents should avoid if at all possible making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

School

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. The school will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Individual complaints would not be heard by the whole Governing Body at any stage, as this could compromise the impartiality of any panel set up for a disciplinary hearing against a member of staff following a serious complaint. The Governing Body Complaint Panel may consist of between three or five people who may select their own chair.

REGISTRATION

Class registers are listed by year group and in date of birth order. Contact details are included in each register in case of an emergency. Registers are sent to the office each morning and each afternoon. Teachers are responsible for sending registers to the office.

Registers will be called promptly at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers will be marked in black and red biro and in accordance with the list of symbols shown in the register front sheet. (see Appendix A)

Registers will close at 9.05am and 1.05pm (1:20 for KS2). If a pupil fails to arrive before the registers are closed, s/he will be marked as absent. Pupils who arrive after the register has closed will be marked accordingly.

Registers are inspected by the Head teacher each Friday in order to ensure correct procedures are followed. Codes are kept in the front of the register. Only black and red biro is used and no correcting fluid is permitted.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

It is vital that all staff adhere to the same criteria when deciding whether to not to authorise an absence.

An absence can be **authorised** if:

- The pupil was absent with leave;
- The pupil was ill 'or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause';
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents;
- There is a family bereavement;
- The pupil is attending an interview/visit for a place at another school;
- The pupil is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off site tuition;
- The pupil is attending a Pupil Referral Unit;
- The pupil is participating in an approved public performance;
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion;
- Leave of absence is authorised by the school for a family holiday of no more than one week.

Absence should be **unauthorised** if:

- No explanation is forthcoming;
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation;
- The pupil is shopping during school hours;
- The pupil is absent for an **unexceptional** purpose e.g. a birthday
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period of time longer than that negotiated with the school (normally a maximum of two weeks)

HOLIDAYS

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term time. Indeed, parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. If, however, parents apply to the school in advance, the school may authorise up to two weeks of term-time absence in any school year for a family holiday. Apart from this, authorisation of leave in term-time can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

Occasionally, holidays of more than two weeks to visit family living overseas may be planned. Parents are urged to discuss with the school staff, the most appropriate time of year and the point in the child's educational career for this visit to take place. This will help minimise disruption to the child's progress at school.

All term time absences must be requested 4 weeks in advance using the term time absence form.

PROCEDURES FOR FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE

Parents are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.30am. If no contact has been made on the first day of absence the school will contact the parents to discover reason of absence.

If pupil is persistently (or intermittently) absent the Head teacher will invite the parents into school for a meeting and inform the Education Welfare Officer. If the absence or lateness continues despite the school's efforts the situation will be handled by the Education Welfare Officer.

Absence notes must be sent in on the child's return from parents and will be kept for three years.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Haresfield School will work to provide an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed, that pupils feel their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.

Attendance data will be regularly monitored. Each day the registers are checked by the Head teacher or secretary so that unexplained absences or emerging patterns can be recognised. Every Friday pupil attendance is input onto SIMS attendance by the secretary. At the end of every month the Head teacher is given SIMS attendance print out of the percentage attendance in each year group. Any concerns are dealt with following the attendance policy systems. Appropriate support from outside agencies will be sought for any pupils experiencing attendance difficulties.

Each term the Head teacher collects the attendance data and shares it with staff – marking children of concern and discussing any issues. The staff use this information at parent evening meetings to share concerns if necessary. Good attendance is celebrated, each term a certificate is given for 100% attendance and at the end of the summer term a postcard is sent home to congratulate a child for 100% attendance. Attendance is recorded on the end of year school reports

Parents will be reminded regularly via newsletters or letters from the LEA about the importance of good attendance.

This policy has been written in line with all other Safe Guarding policies in school and has been seen and reviewed by the Governing Body.

ATTENDANCE POLICY**ATTENDANCE CODES**

Registers to be called promptly at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Registers to be sent to the office once called.

Black and red biro's only to be used in registers

No correcting fluids

Errors should be clearly over-written or added at the bottom of the page.

The following codes only should be used in the register:

CODE	DESCRIPTION/USAGE	STATISTICAL MEANING	PHYSICAL MEANING
/	Present at morning session	Present	In for whole session
\	Present at afternoon session	Present	In for whole session
L	Late before registration closes	Present	Late for the session
@	Late after registration closes	Unauthorised absence	Late for the session
O	Unauthorised absence – pupil is absent from a session and no reason is provided by the parent	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
M	Medical or dental treatment	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
H	Annual family holiday	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
V	Educational visit	Present	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity – supervised by someone authorised by the school	Present	Out for whole session
T	Traveller	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
E	Excluded – permanent exclusions	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance – a festival/observance by the religious body to which the parent/pupil belongs	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
!	No attendance required e.g. Reception pupils who attend part-time	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
X	Only staff should attend - e.g. In-Set	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure – e.g. adverse weather conditions	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances – only to be used after consultation with the Head teacher	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
B	Educated offsite	Authorised absence	Out for whole session