Hardwick Primary School

Caring Achieving Respectful Exciting

Attendance Policy

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Hardwick Primary School

Attendance Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to all staff, governors and parents.

Statement

Regular attendance at school is vital if children are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers. Patterns of punctuality and attendance begun at school often continue into adulthood and future employment. Encouraging children to have a responsible attitude towards school attendance helps prepare them for their adult lives. It is important to ensure that the most vulnerable children are given the same opportunities. This may require additional intervention and support.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents, the local community 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.

All staff will encourage good attendance and the school will liaise with home and other agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and be recognised as such by the school.

Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is normal by:
  - ✓ ensuring children are only absent due to illness
  - ✓ encouraging parents to notify school on the first day of absence
  - ✓ rewarding 100% attendance

- To promote a classroom ethos where punctuality is expected and late arrivals are aware that they are disrupting routines and learning opportunities

- To encourage visits to country of origin and other family holidays to be taken during school holidays by not authorising requests for absence during term time except in *very* exceptional circumstances (see 9 Request for Leave of Absence)

Objectives

- To involve the children in their school attendance
- To have good communication with parents about attendance
- For all school staff to see responsibility for promoting good attendance and recording attendance as part of their role
- To have effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- To have an effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service

Attendance and Absence

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

i. Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
ii. Unauthorised (where the school will not approve pupil absence)

It is expected that parents/guardians will provide an explanation if the child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, in person at the school or by appointment.
If contact is not made by the parents, then the school will attempt to contact the parents on the first day of absence and on subsequent days.

If absence due to sickness is causing concern, for example attendance has fallen below 87% and the absence pattern is unexplained or made up of several isolated days, a child may be referred to the school nurse and will be referred to The Education Welfare Service. The Head Teacher may decide that he will only authorise the absence on receipt of suitable medical evidence. This could include a prescription form, appointment card or conversation with health personnel. Parents will be notified about this requirement by letter.

The Head Teacher / Head of School will regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

Children with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the presentation of certificates at the end of each term and at the end of the school year.

Completing the Register

The twice daily requirement to register pupils should be perceived as an opportunity to welcome the children formally. Class teachers take the register every morning and afternoon that school is open to pupils. Totals are noted for fire and emergency purposes. Each absence is recorded with the correct code using the symbols advised by Derby City Education Welfare Service.

The Attendance Officer monitors the registers after registration every morning and contacts the parents of first day absentees who have not notified the school.

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the latest versions of Keeping Pupil Registers – Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations and Absence and Attendance Codes – Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities both are published by the Department of Education.

The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that the importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents that may be required in a court of law. Any alterations should be visible and explained.

The Governing Body is responsible for registering the computerised registers with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. The Electronic copies of the register have to be printed out once a month and kept in the same way as manual registers. These are legal documents.

Lateness

Whole school morning session begin at 8:55 am. In the afternoon Key Stage 1 and Foundation begins at 12.30pm, Year 3 and 4 begins at 12.50pm and Year 5 and 6 begins at 1.10pm, except for nursery whose afternoon session begins at 12.15pm. All pupils are expected to be in school for registration at these times. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

All lateness, after the registers are closed (thirty minutes after the start of each session), will be treated as unauthorised absence and the same procedures as for absence will be followed.

Monitoring and Referral

Attendance is monitored regularly by the Attendance Officer who will report concerns to the Extended Schools and Attendance HLTA and the Education Welfare Officer.

- Extended Schools and Attendance HLTA will contact parents to arrange an appointment to discuss non-attendance
- If non-attendance continues parents will be invited to school for a formal meeting with the Extended Schools and Attendance HLTA and Education Welfare Officer. (if parents fail to attend without explanation the Education Welfare Officer will accept the case work responsibility).
- The Attendance Officer will monitor for a 4 week period the pupil's attendance.
- If no improvement in the pupil's attendance the Education Welfare Officer will be informed and the full case work responsibility will be transferred to the Local Authority.

Persistent Absence

New regulations require that the school monitors Persistent Absence. Any child who has an attendance level of 96% or below on a regular basis is classed as at risk of becoming a persistent absentee by the end of the academic year. This information will be collected every half-term and parents will be informed by letter if their child's attendance places them in this category.

Leave of absence

- No holidays during term time will be authorised.
- Leave of Absence will only be authorised by the Head Teacher
- School will continue to authorise one days leave for each Eid provided a leave of absence request is completed.
- Following guidance from Education Welfare Services the exceptional circumstances, for an absence to be authorised will be:
- Significant family bereavement, i.e. Mother (step), Father (step) principal carer or sibling,
- Significant family illness to Mother (step), Father (step), sibling or principal career.
- Disclosure of significant abuse where a short leave of absence may be beneficial to recovery
- Involvement in court proceedings, either in the family courts or in criminal proceedings

Fixed Penalty Notices

Parents/Guardians may receive a Penalty Notice payable up to £60 per parent per child for unauthorised leave of absence or MAY result in the child losing their school place.

The attendance policy applies to all pupils in our school.

Attendance - Information for Parents

Regular attendance at school is vital if children are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers. Patterns of punctuality and attendance begun at school often continue into adulthood and future employment. Encouraging children to have a responsible attitude towards school attendance helps prepare them for their adult lives.

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

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Holidays during term time will not be authorised. Parents/Guardians may receive a Penalty Notice payable up to £60 per parent per child for unauthorised leave of absence or MAY result in the child losing their school place.

The school aims to have all children attending regularly and punctually. Children who fail to attend will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

What can parents do to help?

- Let the school know why your child is away. Please telephone the school before 8:55am if possible.
- Try to make routine (non- urgent) appointments (e.g. dental, doctors and optician appointments) outside of school time to avoid disruption to your child's learning.
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary. Please note that visits to the airport to collect or see off visitors will be regarded as truancy and not authorised.
- Send a note when your child returns to school.

If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

- Talk to your child, it may be something simple.
- Talk to your child's class teacher, Phase Leader or Head Teacher.
- Talk to the Extended Schools and Attendance HLTA
- Talk to the Education Welfare Service.

Parents need to be aware that Derby City Schools are operating Fixed Penalty Notices and a Fast Track Prosecution System in conjunction with the Education Welfare Services.