

High Spen Primary School



Attendance Policy

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

This Policy is intended to provide Governors, L.A officers, parents, staff and other Agencies with a point of reference for:-

- i) evidence of the school's intentions and
- ii) a document against which to judge the school's practices

This policy reflects the philosophy of High Spen Primary School Staff regarding the attendance of pupils and it ensures the children's entitlement to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum and was written, in consultation with all members of staff, by the Headteacher.

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act requires parents or carers to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. This is a prime responsibility of parents /carers.

This school is responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day, at 9.00am and again at 1.00pm. An entry is made in the official school register.

Implementation

As a school we will ensure that:

- pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- attendance targets are set for individual pupils if necessary
- **a first day of absence response text/telephone call will be made by 9.30am**
- parents/carers are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised
- where parents or carers do not respond to first contact by 10.30am, school will work through other listed contacts to establish contact / obtain a reason for absence
- pupil attendance and lateness is monitored on the Thursday of week 1, 11, 21 and 31, with a final attendance review being shared with the end of year report.
- school attendance statistics are reported
- we will work to support persistent absentees and their families
- children are taught the importance of punctuality
- in line with the DFE amended regulations (2013) term time holiday will not be authorised
- where there are exceptional circumstances families may apply for a leave of absence

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- attend school regularly
- where appropriate inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absence
- try to achieve as close to 100% attendance as possible
- attend regularly so that each class has the best opportunity to win Albert, the weekly attendance bear

- arrive at school on time

Parents or carers will:

- encourage good attendance
- inform the school on the first day of non-attendance. This should be done before 9am and can be done 24hr using Gateway App, FB Messenger or by leaving an answer machine message.
- discuss planned absences with the school in advance and complete a leave of absence form, should exceptional circumstances arise.
- Promote good attendance of other pupils by adhering to the NHS advice of keeping their child off school for 48 hours after any episode of sickness or diarrhoea.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- This school will review this attendance policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be shared with parents via the school website and promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Monitoring Measures

We review the attendance of all children on the Thursday of week 1, 11, 21 and 31, with a final attendance review being shared with the end of year report. The Attendance Monitor is a rolling document, so should a child be at 'letter 2' in the summer monitoring period, they will start September at 'letter 2'.

1. Under 90% requires 1st letter response
2. If no improvement during next reporting period - 2nd letter.
3. Should this have no impact within the following reporting period - 3rd letter. This requires parents/carers to attend an Attendance Forum chaired by appointed Governor and Head Teacher.
4. If strategies for improvement are not secured an Educational Welfare Referral will be made to the Local Authorities Legal Intervention Team.
5. If insufficient improvement is made, the case will be forwarded to Gateshead's Non Attendance Panel.

Holidays during Term Time (Leave of Absence)

- Holidays will not be authorised during term time (except in *exceptional circumstances** – see appendix 2)
- If the holiday is taken, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence (see appendix 3)
- If the holiday/leave of absence takes a child over 10 days of unauthorised holiday related absence in the current school year, or if the child is already on the Attendance Monitor, parents and carers will be referred to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice may be issued (see appendix 4 or 5)

Punctuality

The school bell rings at 8.55am. This allows sufficient time for children to line up and enter school, ready for a 9am register to be taken.

The school gate is closed at 9am. Families arriving after this time will use the side gate, entering via the school office. School Office staff will record this in the Late Book, to support the monitoring of poor punctuality.

*Exceptional Circumstances

The government and schools realise that it is more expensive to go on holiday during the school holiday period than at other times of the year. However, it is the view of the DfE that a child(ren) should be in school for the 39 weeks of the academic year and that holidays in term time, in whatever form, are not considered to be 'exceptional' circumstances. Less expensive holidays are not a good enough reason for taking a child or young person out of school.

Absence from school under exceptional circumstances is slightly different from taking a holiday in term time. In deciding whether or not to grant a leave of absence for 'exceptional circumstances', the following will be considered:

- What is the normal pattern of attendance for the child(ren) who is asking for a leave of absence?
- What is 'exceptional' for one family might be the norm for another family.

Examples of 'exceptional circumstances' might include:

- A special one-off family event (30th wedding anniversary of grandparents; parents wedding) - but one that doesn't happen on an annual basis
- A funeral which requires the family to travel some distance etc
- The receipt of a special award which means the family need to travel some distance and stay overnight
- A parent who has the potential for a new job and wants to take their family with them to see if they like the area
- A parent who is in the Armed Forces might be considered under 'exceptional' circumstances, however, parents who have set holidays due to their work patterns are not considered to be 'exceptional' circumstances.

Appendix 2: Request for leave of absence authorised

***Full postal address
including post code***

Date: *<insert date>*

Dear *<insert parent's title and surname>*

**Re: <insert child's name and DOB>
Request for leave of absence <insert dates of leave requested>**

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

I have considered your recent request for a leave of absence during term time for *<insert child's name>* and feel it meets the criteria. I therefore confirm that in this instance I have authorised this planned absence from to

However, I must point out that the school strongly discourages leave of absence during term time (as outlined in the school attendance policy) due to the impact any absence has on a child's education and social progress.

May I also remind you that future requests for leave of absence may not be authorised, and if leave is taken without prior authorisation, a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

**Full postal address
including post code**

Date: <*insert date*>

Dear <*insert parent's title and surname*>

**Re: <insert child's name and DOB>
Request for leave of absence <insert dates of leave requested>**

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

I have considered your recent request for a leave of absence during term time for <*insert child's name*> and feel it does not meet the criteria for the following reason:-

-

I am therefore unable to authorise the absence in instance.

The school attendance policy clearly states that should a leave of absence be taken without prior authorisation, a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. If the holiday takes a child over 10 days of unauthorised holiday related absence in the current school year, or if the child is already on the Attendance Monitor, parents and carers will be referred to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice may be issued. The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

**Full postal address
including post code**

Date: <*insert date*>

Dear <*insert parent's title and surname*>

**Re: < insert child's name and DOB>
Request for leave of absence < insert dates of leave requested>**

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Unfortunately It has come to my attention that <*insert child's name*> has taken <*insert number of days*> days leave of absence without the prior request being made to the school.

The school's attendance policy makes it clear that parents must seek permission in writing from the Head Teacher in advance should they wish their child to take a leave of absence during term time.

As you did not request permission for this leave of absence it has not been authorised. Where a holiday/leave of absence takes a child over 10 days of unauthorised holiday related absence in the current school year, or where the child is already on the Attendance Monitor, parents and carers will be referred to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

**Full postal address
including post code**

Date: <*insert date*>

Dear <*insert parent's title and surname*>

**Re: <insert child's name and DOB>
Request for leave of absence <insert dates of leave requested>**

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Unfortunately, as your child has taken an unauthorised leave of absence during term time, which meets the criteria set out in our attendance policy, I am referring the matter to the Local Authority to request a Penalty Notice be issued against you.

The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher